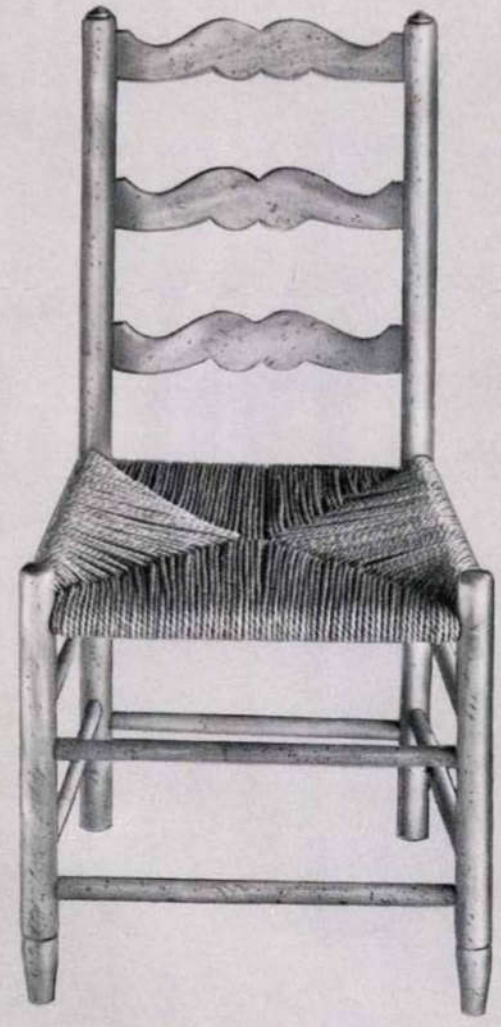
The Beaver

WINTER 1975



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Editor: Helen Burgess

Carver and actor Munamee of Cape Dorset, sketched by Susan Ross as he works on a piece of local white quartzite. He played the role of Sowniapik in James Houston's 'White Dawn'.

CONTENTS

HANTZSCH OF BAFFIN ISLAND 4
Leslie H. Neatby

THE 'MISSES NOLIN' OF RED RIVER 14
Donald Chaput

JAMES SUTHERLAND: INLAND TRADER 1751-1797 19
Shirlee A. Smith

TRAIN TO HAY RIVER 24
James B. Armstrong

LIFE ON THE LAND 32
Photographs by A. McTavish

36 **PETER PITSEOLAK: ARTIST AND AUTHOR**
Dorothy Eber

40 **BUSH WIFE**
Eileen Williamson

46 **THE BELANEYS OF BRANDON HILLS**
Donald B. Smith

51 **CAPE DORSET FACES**
Sketches by Susan Ross

54 **MORTUARY ART FROM THE NORTHWEST COAST**
Margaret B. Blackman

58 **NORTHERN BOOKS**

COVER: Six-year-old Eileen Hartley of Big Trout Lake, painted in the winter of 1964 by Susan Ross.

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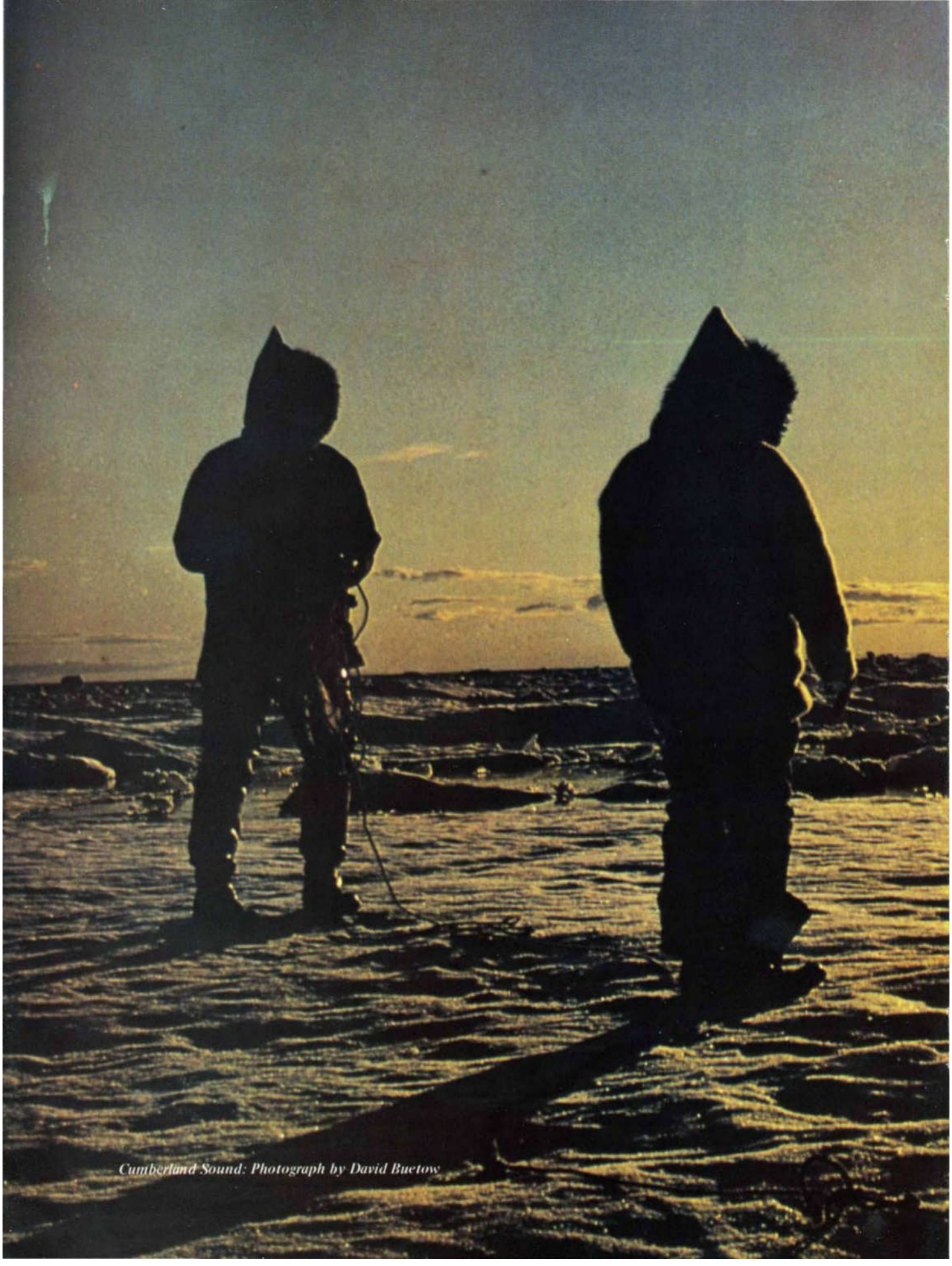
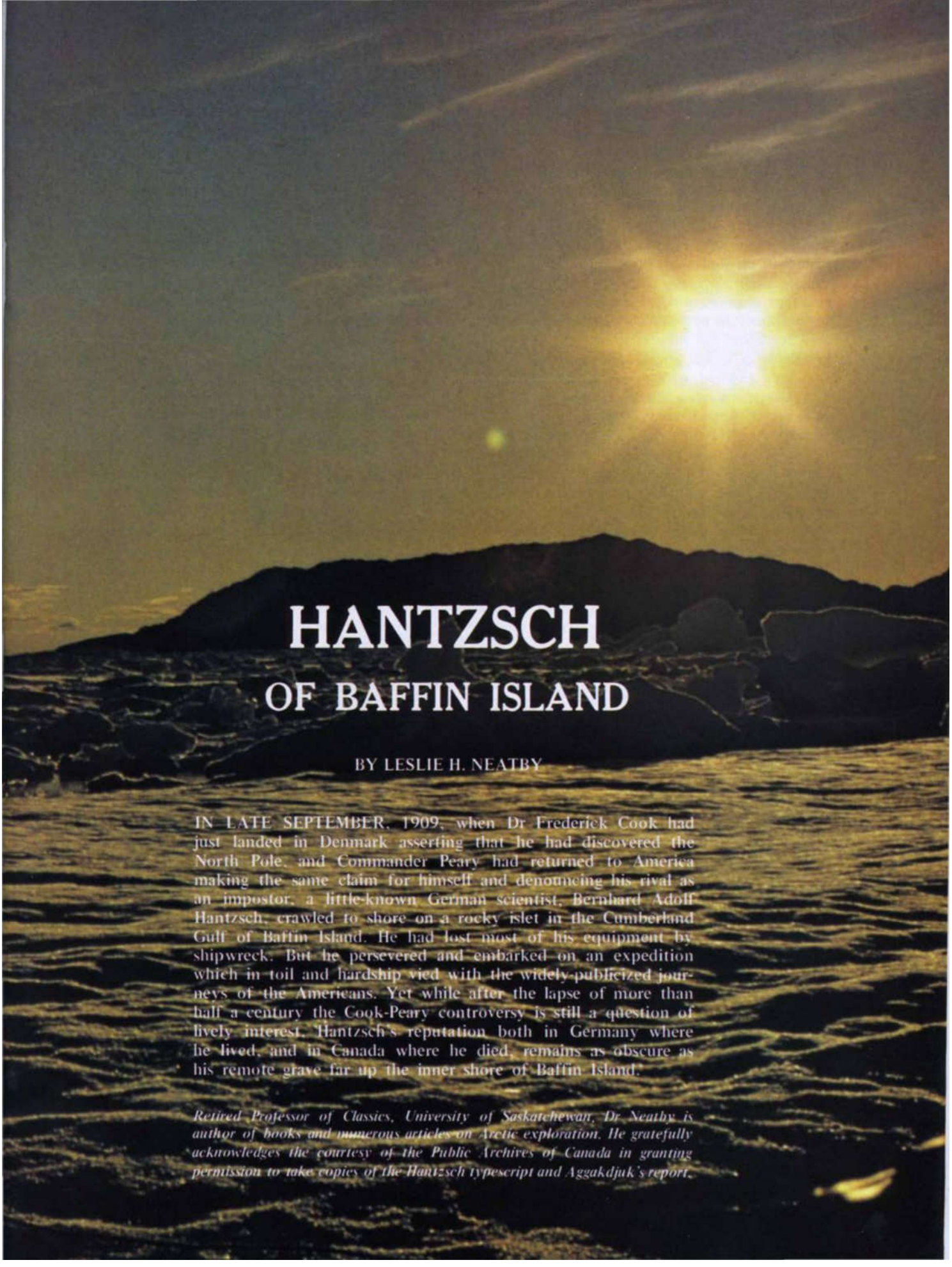


Cumberland Sound: Photograph by David Buetow



HANTZSCH OF BAFFIN ISLAND

BY LESLIE H. NEATBY

IN LATE SEPTEMBER, 1909, when Dr Frederick Cook had just landed in Denmark asserting that he had discovered the North Pole, and Commander Peary had returned to America making the same claim for himself and denouncing his rival as an impostor, a little-known German scientist, Bernhard Adolf Hantzsch, crawled to shore on a rocky islet in the Cumberland Gulf of Baffin Island. He had lost most of his equipment by shipwreck. But he persevered and embarked on an expedition which in toil and hardship vied with the widely-publicized journeys of the Americans. Yet while after the lapse of more than half a century the Cook-Peary controversy is still a question of lively interest, Hantzsch's reputation both in Germany where he lived, and in Canada where he died, remains as obscure as his remote grave far up the inner shore of Baffin Island.

Retired Professor of Classics, University of Saskatchewan, Dr Neatby is author of books and numerous articles on Arctic exploration. *He gratefully acknowledges the courtesy of the Public Archives of Canada in granting permission to take copies of the Hantzsch typescript and Aggakdjuk's report.*

In 1909 Hantzsch was thirty-four years of age and had won some celebrity for his ornithological work in Iceland and Labrador. Though this was his special field he had aspirations as an explorer, and he fixed on one of the few areas where wholly original discovery could still be made, the eastern shore of Foxe Basin which forms the upper lobe of Hudson Bay.

Luke Foxe had visited that coast in 1631, and had perhaps ascended as high as the Arctic Circle, on the latitude of the Koukdjuak River which Hantzsch was to explore. Later travellers – Middleton, Parry, and Rae – gave their attention to the opposite side of the Basin. Its eastern shore, the west side of Baffin Island remained a *terra incognita*, not fully surveyed until 1940. Some knowledge of it was gained indirectly by the whalers who from 1840 on, were fishing in Cumberland Gulf. The celebrated Captain William Penny knew of the inland sea of Lake Nettilling, which he named Lake Kennedy. In 1884 the anthropologist Franz Boas, using the trading station on Kekerten Island as his base, went up the upper arm of Cumberland Gulf, Nettilling Fiord, and crossed the low height of land to the shore of Lake Nettilling, which, as he learned from the Eskimos, drained westward through the Koukdjuak River into Foxe Basin. It was Hantzsch's purpose to establish himself on Kekerten Island, and hauling a boat (the gift of the German Navy) to follow Boas's route to Lake Nettilling, cross it by boat and sail down the Koukdjuak to the sea. Thence he would travel up the unknown shore to Igloolik, and perhaps cross upper Baffin Island to Pond Inlet, where he could hope to be picked up by the CGS *Arctic* or some other vessel. Had he achieved his purpose – quite feasible in all but the last optional lap – he would have ranked with the other great polar travellers of the era.

Through the patronage of wealthy individuals and learned societies, the young scientist was liberally supplied with scientific equipment, foodstuffs, and trade goods (to hire the Eskimo helpers on whom alone he intended to rely). He made his way from Dresden to Dundee, Scotland, and boarded the Dutch schooner *Jantina Agatha*, chartered by a Scottish firm to carry the annual supplies to Blacklead and Kekerten Islands. A fellow-passenger was the missionary at Blacklead, the Reverend E. W. T. Greenshield. The account of the voyage to Cumberland Gulf was one of bad luck, culminating in disaster. Continually baffled by fogs and headwinds the schooner spent almost two months on a voyage she had once made in twenty-five days. On 26 September 1909, when almost in sight of her first port of call, she was nipped by the ice and sunk. Hantzsch's boat enabled him to save a portion of his goods; passengers and crew made shore on a small islet from where friendly Eskimos carried them in their stout whaleboats to Blacklead Island. There Hantzsch was obliged to winter, some distance short of his intended base at Kekerten.

Mr Greenshield found space for the shipwrecked party in the mission house, the only European establishment remaining on the island, where supplies were

The Reverend E.W.T. Greenshield (left) at work on the hospital for the Blacklead Island Mission.

E. J. PECK COLLECTION ANGLICAN CHURCH ARCHIVES

stored in sufficient quantity to provide a scanty ration for the winter months, if eked out by seal meat purchased from the Eskimo settlement. Hantzsch spent this period in associating closely with the natives from whom he was to recruit his travelling party and in assisting Mr Greenshield in religious services and medical work, taking full charge of those functions when the missionary was absent on pastoral duties elsewhere. He made one of a party travelling by sledge to Kekerten where they found that, in consequence of the wreck of the schooner, the two traders there were living on the same meagre ration as themselves.

In the course of the winter Hantzsch found that his travel plan, of necessity curtailed by the loss of most of his supplies, was threatened by complete cancellation. In January the sailors angrily demanded that he turn over some of his remaining ammunition to their Eskimo hunters. He refused to comply, and the lucky discovery of a hoard of powder and shot in the mission house deferred the crisis. On 19 March 1910 Mr Warrender, chief trader at Kekerten, appeared at Blacklead and with the backing of the sailors insisted that all goods on hand at the two stations should be collected into a common stock and shared by the Europeans – ten in all – who were wintering in the Gulf. Hantzsch was asked to give up his hoarded foods: biscuit, soup tablets, butter, cheese, and condensed milk. His ammunition and tobacco, which were to furnish the Eskimos with the means for hunting and payment for the game they brought in, were also demanded. When the German passionately refused to make a surrender which would ruin his journey, the seamen vowed that they would take his property by force. If Hantzsch is to be believed they were only deterred from offering him personal violence by Mr Greenshield's intervention.

The missionary, who had spent his own resources – or rather those of his Church – in keeping alive both parties to the dispute, was wholly in sympathy with the men. He was appalled by Hantzsch's threat of making the matter an international incident by complaining to the British and German governments, and he dreaded the scandal of robbery committed within the walls of the mission house, with himself all too probably being cited as an accomplice. 'The word of a missionary' he noted in his diary 'counts for little with the public, especially against that of one who ranks as a man of science.'

After days of altercation he secured a compromise through which Hantzsch, by giving up a portion of what was demanded, obtained unchallenged possession of the rest. No one died of starvation, though in the ensuing summer Mr Greenshield and others had to support themselves by gathering the eggs of wildfowl. The only excuse for the German's callous behaviour – and it was not a bad one – was that, as he afterwards demonstrated, he was as ready to sacrifice his own life as the lives of others in dedicated pursuit of his mission.

FROM THE DEWEY SOPER COLLECTION

Bernhard Adolf Hantzsch 1875-1911.

Hantzsch was thus left with the essential ammunition and tobacco and enough foodstuffs to serve as an emergency ration for the reduced party which was now all that he could afford. His escort was to consist of three men (of necessity accompanied by their families) with dogs and sledges. As headman he enlisted Aggakdjuk, a small but sturdy man in his mid-forties: brave, generous, and loyal, though easily discouraged and 'wanting constancy in the achievement of a purpose . . . With these people one must take that into account.' Aggakdjuk was respected by his own people as a shrewd counsellor; he was a Christian and capable of conducting church service, as he was frequently to do in the course of the journey.

With Aggakdjuk travelled his wife, Arnga, who asserted a good-humoured mastery over her easy-going husband; their adopted son, Aggulukdjuk – a sluggish, clumsy, well-meaning youth; and their four daughters, ranging in age from nine years to five months – an embarrassing burden, which Hantzsch accepted with regret.

As second helper he obtained Ittusakdjuak, 'a man of very distinguished appearance, who might be considered a really handsome example of the Eskimo type, in the prime of life, the late thirties, of very kindly appearance, a baptized Christian, seeming robust and friendly, so that I trusted him from the outset.' His wife, Sirkinirk, some years older than her husband 'was lauded by Mr Greenshield as a model of industry, diligence and neatness.' The couple were childless, and Hantzsch was to share their tent on the journey. Like many efficient housekeepers Sirkinirk was domineering. She held her husband in meek subjection, and as Hantzsch's command of the native tongue improved he was to bicker with her, as he might have done with the *Hausfrau* of a Dresden rooming-place.

To act as guide to Lake Nettilling and to furnish the extra dogs required to haul the boat to its launching-place Hantzsch enrolled the fifty-year-old Ittirk, 'a resolute man, not readily shrinking from danger and toil in spite of his grey hair, a most patient hunter and a good shot, and in all respects a very capable man.' Ittirk was accompanied by his wife Pitukta, and two sons, Tikkitirto and Nuchinga. Hantzsch was less attracted to this family: Ittirk was a persistent sponger, and Pitukta was of shrewish disposition. He had a warm regard for Tikkitirto who was friendly, modest, intelligent, and a first-rate shot, but disliked the brash stripling Nuchinga, whom, though useful in collecting natural specimens, he found to be prying and impudent.

Living in intimacy with these families gave Hantzsch ample scope for observing and criticizing their ways, and he does so freely but with little trace of racial or cultural superiority. He censures them as he would Europeans whose habits he found distasteful. He regards the troublesome Sirkinirk as no more than the type of her sex all the world over. He utters peevish complaints of his hunters' sluggishness when they have a reserve of meat, and of their greed and improvidence in consuming it, but has the sense and candour to observe that such traits are derived naturally from the mode of life in the Arctic. He repeatedly affirms his conviction that the Eskimos are more honest and a kindlier folk than Europeans, and lead a happier, more wholesome life than the enslaved toilers in the offices and factories of a German city.

With a party numbering in all fourteen persons Hantzsch took his departure from Blacklead on 22 April 1910. They journeyed slowly and by relay. The three dog-teams combined to haul the boat a stage and came back to bring up personnel and household effects. Hummocks, snowdrifts, and open leads were ever-recurring obstacles; the burdened Eskimos had little time for and poor luck in hunting seal. Native families which had spent the winter in isolation near some *sarbak* – a stretch where the surface of the gulf had been kept open by the rush of the tide and where seal were easy to get – gave help generously, and on 3 May the expedition finished its first lap by reaching the islet of Nuvujen.

At this place, once a flourishing whaling station and now a ghost town haunted by a few families, the travellers halted for a few days' rest and found a hospitable reception which Hantzsch repaid by small gifts of tobacco and by giving medical treatment to two ailing members of the community. These were the last human contacts the exploring party was to have for many months. From Nuvujen on, the land was without inhabitants (except for those on the summer caribou hunt) all the way to the western sea.

They resumed their journey, the Eskimos now hunting with better success and Hantzsch making diligent surveys, later to be embodied in the map of his route.

Hantzsch and his party spent several days in or near these flat lowlands of southwestern Nettilling Lake in early August 1910.

DEWEY SOPER

They soon left the shore of Cumberland Gulf and went up a narrow arm of the sea, Nettilling Fiord. Hantzsch marvelled at the rugged beauty of the mountainous country through which he was threading his way and went into raptures over the glories of sunlit landscapes and arctic twilights. Travelling conditions in the fiord were not in keeping with its natural charms: its frozen surface was growing untrustworthy with the approach of spring, and was raising doubts whether the travellers would be able to reach Lake Nettilling by sledge. They paused at seals' breathing-holes to observe with anxiety the diminishing thickness of the ice cover and traversed, not without danger, stretches where the surface was much shattered and drenched with the water that oozed up from beneath. The tide running violently up the narrow fiord opened *sarbaks* past which the road must be chosen with care. To round one of these, the caravan was forced to mount an icy escarpment overhanging the tide-vexed waters that were gnawing at its base. On June 6 they arrived at Kangianga, the innermost angle of the fiord, where they left salt water and took to the land. On the decaying ice of a series of little rivers and freshwater lakes they mounted to the height of land, a low saddle some 60 metres above sea level, and by a similar chain of waterways went down to Isoa, the east end of the great inland sea of Lake Nettilling. Here the journey of Franz Boas had ended: all ahead was new land where the European explorer had no guide save the rude map sketched by Boas from Eskimo report.

They sledged on, following the southern shore of the lake and much hindered by snow melt flooding the icy surface and forming great ponds across their path. On 8 July they came to the promontory of Tikerakdjuak, and finding themselves cut off from the shore by a margin of water, they dismounted the boat from its sledge and ferried themselves to land. Here Hantzsch set up his summer camp and busied himself collecting specimens of bird, plant, and animal life, while waiting for the break-up of the lake ice to allow him to continue his journey afloat. He had a fair measure of success in his botanical and zoölogical work, and the party lived high and without much exertion on the flesh of the snow goose. But men and beasts were fearfully plagued by myriads of mosquitoes. The dogs, though they burrowed frantically into the sand until only their heads were visible, could not elude these tormentors. Some even died, leaving the party shorter than ever of transport.

By mid-August the ice of the lake had dispersed, and it was time to part from Ittirk and his family. It had been arranged that they would return to Blacklead with Eskimos who came up in summer by boat to hunt the caribou. Ittirk's wages had been agreed upon the previous winter, when he and his employer understood one another imperfectly. As the Eskimo was grasping and the German was too ill-supplied for

An Eskimo woman and child at a small village in Cumberland Sound. Hantzsch would have seen similar homes along his route to Nettilling Fiord.

DEWEY SOPER

ANGLICAN CHURCH ARCHIVES

The Eskimo women who travelled with Hantzsch would have been known to these first three converts to Christianity at the Blacklead Island mission. With the unidentified women is the Reverend E. J. Peck.

the uncertainties of the long journey ahead, it is not surprising that they had a bitter quarrel over the terms of their contract, in which the sharp-tongued Pitukta was a lively participant. An agreement was finally reached, and when on 13 August Hantzsch embarked in the boat with his nine remaining companions Ittirk and Pitukta parted from him with the warmest tokens of friendship, which the German, who did not forgive overnight, rather grudgingly records.

The toil and hardship of the journey from Blacklead to Lake Nettilling had been redeemed, for Hantzsch, by the grandeur and majesty of the scenery. The autumn voyage was unrelieved misery for himself and his companions. Ittusakdjuak and Sirkinirk were obliged to follow the shore on foot to bring up the dogs: in consequence the boat had to keep close to the shore of a dismal landscape – 'flat and tundra-like' and in places 'full of pebbly rubble . . . which lends a dead and barren aspect to the land.' They were grounded for days at a time by furious gales and heavy rain. Hantzsch sat disconsolately in his tent 'with the roar of the wind and the thunder of the waves' forever in his ears. He found some consolation in the rib of a whale and the jawbone of a walrus which Aggakdjuk picked up, confirming his belief that the chain of valleys and lakes he was traversing was the elevated floor of what had once been an ocean strait.

They laboured on, though much hampered by headwinds, and on 30 August came to 'the eddying waters which mark the inflow into the Kokdjuak.' Three weeks more were spent in descending the river to the sea. It again became necessary to advance by relay, carrying the freight ahead to the next camp-site and bringing the boat back for the women and children. The river was broad and shallow; its shore was lined with sandbanks, and islets extended a kilometre from the land. At the end of a stage the travellers had to wade ashore through 150 metres of ice-cold water bearing part of the cargo, before the lightened boat could be tugged this way and that and coaxed into a secure berth. The men exhausted themselves pursuing caribou over 'swampy and yielding tundra'. 'Tuesday, September 13 . . . The channel is the worst that we have yet come upon; the river bottom is so shallow and so studded with projecting limestone that in spite of a careful lookout we ground repeatedly, which, in a strong wind and a powerful current, is not void of danger.' 'September 14. The tundra lies in snow, and the grey wintry sky broods over it.' On the 17th the river was found to be only knee-deep 200 metres from land, but its weakening current was a welcome sign that they were near the sea. 'Our baggage was brought to land with endless toil, first through 150 metres of water knee-deep, and then to land over 20 metres of ice where the burdened men break through, and lose their footing, and perhaps another 60 metres up the rocky bank.' Hantzsch took sights on a rock on the far shore and ascertained the river to be 2,100 metres across. The next day caribou hunters brought word that a belt of open sea was just visible under the western skyline.

The ground was now covered with snow, and ice was daily extending farther out from the beach. It was impossible for them to reach Igloolik, improbable that they would get far enough up the coast to find a place frequented by Eskimos, and by no means certain that in what promised to be a shallow sea they would find seal to keep them alive. Hantzsch was aware of the danger, but held his own safety as cheap as that of the hungry seamen in the Blacklead mission house. Nor did his Eskimos betray any concern. During the autumn journey it had been Hantzsch's impression that they were dragging their feet to retard progress and induce him to return, but they voiced no misgivings or unwillingness. When Hantzsch alluded to the uncertainty of the future Aggakdjuk replied composedly that now it was too late to think of starting back. They dragged the boat 500 metres up from the river to secure it from spring floods, cached along with it a portion of the baggage including much of the emergency food supply, and began to sledge northward up the ocean shore. As their dogs were reduced in number by disease, mosquitoes, and the loss of Ittirk's team they again had to advance by relay. The

stripling Aggulukdjuk would carry Hantzsch, Ittusakdjuak, and Sirkinirk with tent and equipment ahead a stage, and drive back to fetch Aggakdjuk's family with its belongings. They were crossing a level tundra, strewn with isolated rocks and slashed by river beds, which, for added discomfort, were lined with deep ramps of loose snow.

Supporting themselves on caribou and the occasional hare, the party slowly advanced until the middle of November and came to a final halt near the mouth of a large river, named by Hantzsch the Broizem (the Hantzsch River of the modern map).

The Eskimos set up permanent igloos and went down to the beach to hunt the seals urgently required, especially for the fuel their blubber provided. At first they had no success: the current ran strong along the shore and carried away the seals that were shot before they could be recovered. Aggakdjuk, the handyman, improvised a kayak from tent-poles and the sail of the boat. The few seals salvaged by this means were utterly insufficient for the party's needs. On 29 November Ittusakdjuak and Aggulukdjuk started back to the Koukdjuak River to bring up the European foods stored near its mouth. They came back on 13 December reporting that the load had proved too heavy for the starving dogs; they had cached part of it on the trail not far back. There followed six weeks of fearful privation: seals were impossible to secure; the margin of open water was receding seawards daily, and prolonged vigils at breathing-holes in the intervening ragged ice-field were fruitless. The biscuit, soup tablets, and milk grudgingly doled out were a wretched diet for such a climate. Sirkinirk, who had at first made light of their sufferings, confessed that never in her life had she known such hunger. Yet when Hantzsch was laid up for days with a bronchial cold, the ill-tempered old woman cared for him with the utmost kindness and attended faithfully to his daily weather observations.

On 14 January 1911, 'in cold, hunger and gnawing anxiety', Hantzsch notes that only two seals had been killed in the past month. Blubber fuel was almost exhausted and so was the store of biscuit. 'January 20. Children very hungry, youngest very sick and pitiful to see . . . In this case nothing can help except seal meat to strengthen the mother from whom nourishment is derived. The little biscuit one eats gives no warmth, for it is hard frozen.' A seal killed on the 20th was the merest stop-gap: Hantzsch's ration for the 23rd was 'a few pieces of hard bearded skin.'

No more seals could be got so Ittusakdjuak, though worn out with standing all day at the tide's edge with 'nothing to eat and 40, below', set off again on 25 January to bring in the supplies that supposedly had been dumped on the trail. The next day Hantzsch was appalled to learn what Ittusakdjuak had been ashamed to confess: that the missing food store was not a day's journey away but still lay in its cache at the Koukdjuak. The Eskimo had gone with only 'a small piece of bearded seal skin and a few fragments of blubber' to serve him as food and fuel on a round trip of 150 miles. Sirkinirk was much alarmed. After a few days the cross-grained but indomitable old woman went out with a shot-gun – on the odd chance of meeting a hare – and tramped back two camps to rake in vain the southern skyline with an antiquated whaler's telescope. 'It is a terrible anxiety for me to contemplate the jeopardy of a noble fellow to whom I am much attached' noted Hantzsch. The next day Ittusakdjuak was back. He had had the good luck to kill a hare, and, despite his under-nourished condition had by a miracle escaped frostbite. He came back with a raging thirst, for he had used up his blubber, and had been eating ice for days. After keeping to his couch for nearly a week he rose with his vigour unimpaired.

Ittusakdjuak had come back to find that his cargo of biscuit and soup tablets was no longer so urgently required. During his absence Aggakdjuk had made a long overnight trip upshore and north of the river mouth and had found a place where seals were more numerous and easier to get. Thereafter, though the hunters' success was variable and they were sometimes brought to the verge of want, they were spared a repetition of the crisis of January. On 20 February they abandoned their filthy igloos, now withering away in the heat of the returning sun, and moved past the mouth of the Broizem River, 20 kilometres upshore to an islet where seals were plentiful.

Throughout the hard months Hantzsch's stubborn courage never failed him. In hunger, cold, and squalor, and in cramped quarters, which few writers would have found tolerable, he worked steadily with pen – or with pencil when his ink froze – to compile from his daily journal the formal history of the expedition. This revised narrative, terminating on the arrival at Tikerakdjuak on 8 July 1910, is invaluable for its detailed and sympathetic portrayal of Eskimo life and custom. The rest of his story is told in his raw journal, the daily entries kept up almost to the day of his death.

Refusing to despair when the situation seemed most desperate he had called his men together in mid-January to outline his plans for the early spring. With a light sledge and one or more companions he proposed to make a rapid journey farther up the shore of Foxe Basin. Having added, as he hoped, 200 kilometres to his coastal map he would come back to make an excursion into the hinterland by way of the frozen Broizem River.

On 16 April 1911 he set out with Ittusakdjuak and Sirkinirk to fulfil the first part of his program. They travelled over the sea close to the shoreline, where the ice, nowhere good, was at its smoothest. They were soon short of food and fuel: seals were scarce and very shy; caribou and hare were less satisfying than seal meat and had little of the essential fat. On the twelfth day out when the fuel shortage had become acute, the two Eskimos – apparently spontaneously – gave Hantzsch

the assurance that they would keep on going as long as he wished – 'they have never refused me anything that I earnestly desired.' There is a hint here, as in Aggakdjuk's report (to be quoted later), that Hantzsch's intensity of purpose had given the Eskimos the impression that his was a sacred mission which it would be profane to thwart. On 1 May Ittusakdjuak obtained the needed meat and blubber by killing a polar bear – a seeming windfall, which for Hantzsch was to prove the ultimate disaster. 'A grand store of meat' he noted 'adequate supply for a long time.' It was to last him for the rest of his life.

They travelled on for another week, past a coast varying in height, and seawards a chaos of pack ice which often obliged them to hug every winding of the shoreline. By the 7th the bear's meat was causing the men violent diarrhoea; Sirkinirk was in worse plight, 'lamenting like a child.' Even Hantzsch dared go no farther. On 8 May they travelled their last lap and made their 'farthest' at a barren promontory backed by a hinterland of level plateau. Out to the seaward lay a large island.

As Hantzsch did not live to transfer his observations to the map the point where he turned about cannot be fixed with precision. It is estimated that he had travelled some 125 miles from the winter camp, and was in the vicinity of Piling Bay. It was there on 30 March 1937, that Reynold Bray and Graham Rowley, members of a British-Canadian Arctic expedition en route from Repulse Bay and Igloolik, arrived to put the last touch to the shoreline of Foxe Basin and the coastal map of Canada.

Sick and weary the three travellers began their lagging homeward trek. On 12 May Ittusakdjuak obtained for Hantzsch a much coveted prize, a polar wolf, whose skull and hide he treated at once for delivery to the Royal Berlin Museum. It was the last triumph the devoted scientist was to know. The poison in his system was gaining mastery: he was tortured by fever, thirst, and insomnia. Ittusakdjuak had pains in limbs and head; Sirkinirk was similarly affected in the back and was 'offensively ill-tempered'. On the 16th they rested all day. '17 May. . . . Inclement weather, with a headwind that wears me down, but on we must.' Sirkinirk rode on the sledge 'very miserable. I likewise, but drive myself on though I can hardly take a forward stride.' The seal that would have given the invalids what they most longed for, warmth in their sleeping-quarters, was seen in the distance, but disappeared when they were still two kilometres away. 'The shyness of these animals drives one to despair.' It was Hantzsch's last march. On the 18th he was 'almost too feeble to guide the pen', but struggled out to take a noon altitude. For the next four days they did not move. Sirkinirk was improving, but still helpless. 'The noble Ittusakdjuak! He is not only a strong, indefatigable worker, good-tempered and obliging, but now, when we others can do nothing, he does all our tasks [including weather observations] without a trace of impatience.' On the 21st, with a premonition that Hantzsch's end was near, Ittusakdjuak sat down in the igloo and 'reads aloud a long time from the (Eskimo) New Testament, and though I do not well understand his soft indistinct speech, it still impresses me much.' On the 22nd the Eskimos wrapped him up and carried him forward a stage on the sledge. Then in hunger and weakness they came to an indefinite halt. The killing of two seals by Ittusakdjuk on the 25th was salvation to him and Sirkinirk. It came too late for Hantzsch who lay in the igloo 'brooding sombrely on death'. On the 26th he made the last brief entry in his journal: 'Hardly slept, burning headache, cold compresses.'

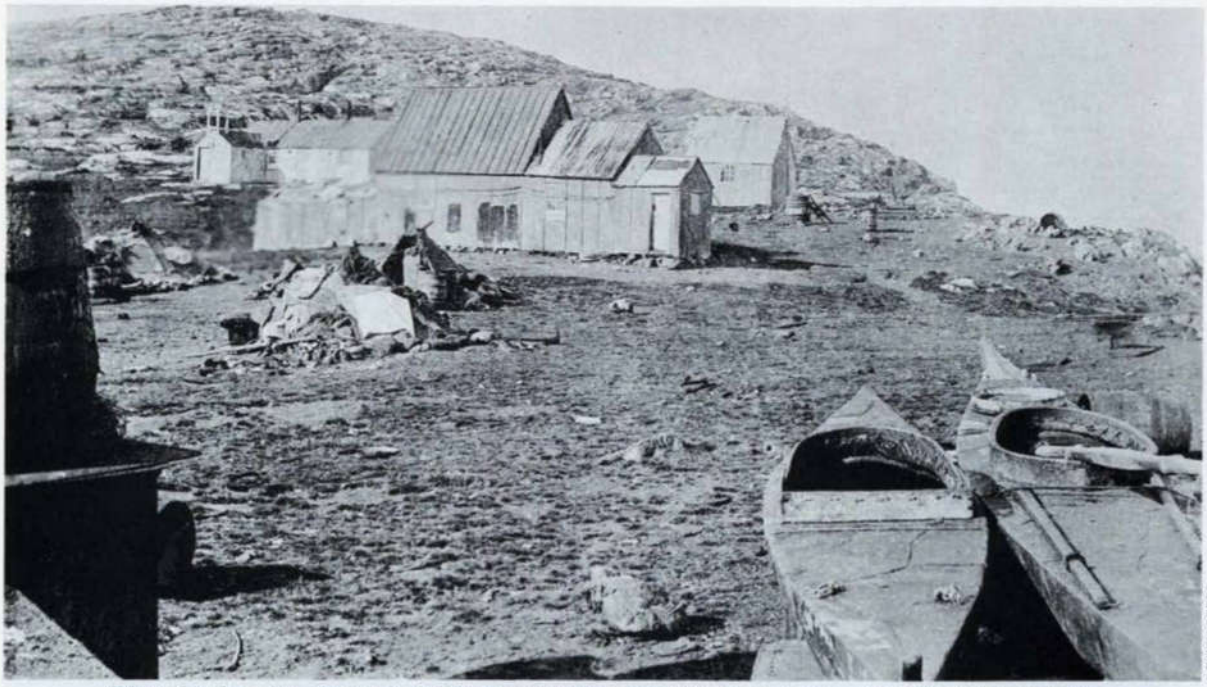
The rest of the tale was written by Aggakdjuk for Mr Greenshield and translated by him into English.

'I write thus an account of my love for our friend, because he is dead in the wilderness, for I love him greatly, and ye also, I love you. He was not frozen, and he was not starved, he was also well clothed, such were not the cause of his death. His death was caused by severe illness, his body, his arms and his legs being very much swollen, his lungs also being affected. In this manner . . . he died . . .

'Indeed truly I am very much distressed, because he died in the wilderness, he who was my brother. Because he desired to have me as a friend I consented, I could not think that he would die, of which death, truly his illness was the only cause. It was because he desired to make a Chart of the land which was far away, he said, that he wished to go. He did not live with us.

'When we had only four dogs left, he said that he wished to make a journey, being absent about four Sundays (i.e. a month), taking as his travelling companion Ittushakjuk (because he had no children), while he [we?] waited for him where we were. So they started off on this journey, he wishing to make a chart of the coast: but they were away for a very long time, because my brother was very ill, and Ittushakjuk's wife also was very ill. Ittushakjuk brought him back to the place where I was awaiting them, and there in my tent he died. While he was there ill, whatever he desired we did for him, we complied with all his wishes. And he spoke thus to us: "Thank you," he said, "very much, (because he was helped and cared for by us), I am unable to write because I have no strength, but when you return, go and speak to Elakatou (i.e. the Missionary) because he is able to write, I cannot do so, I have no strength." He said that he thanked Elakatou also, because he provided him with food . . .

'He also said this while he was very ill, "Go, when you return, and take the goods, which are brought from the white man's land, for yourselves, because I am well cared for by all of you." So he gave them to us. He [we?] wept continually, while he was ill, because of our love for him; and I gave him water whenever he wished to drink, and generally assisted him. My wife and I, from the time



DEWEY SOPER

Eskimo kayaks and tupiks and the buildings of the abandoned whaling station on Kekerten Island, August 1924. Hantzsch visited here in January 1910, but spent most of the winter at the Blacklead Island mission.

that he arrived to us ill, did not sleep at all for four nights. Then on the fourth day he died. I sorrow greatly, because he is dead.

'We made a suitable grave of stone, and it is in a good position. His body cannot be disturbed by foxes or a wolf.

'We also did this. We wishing to pray to God, when we committed his body to the grave, we used the prayers to God for the Burial of the Dead, that he might be taken to be with him truly. I know certainly that he is with God, because his faith is sufficient.'

Hantzsch's grave (marked with a cross by Aggakdjuk or Mr Greenshield on the last section of his map) is on an island, near the crown of a hill overlooking the coast he had explored.

His fatal sickness has not been exactly diagnosed. The arctic authority Graham Rowley thinks that he died of trichinosis caused by eating bear's flesh: a plausible hypothesis supported by the circumstance that his companions suffered similar symptoms.

The loyalty to Hantzsch of his Eskimos and their deference to his wishes did not terminate with his life. They carried all his papers and belongings, including preserved specimens, the long way back and delivered them to Mr Greenshield for transmission to Germany. It can have been no easy journey for three men, burdened with unaccustomed freight and encumbered with children, especially on the first lap from the winter camp to the outflow of the Koukdjuak, where the boat and the heavy baggage were cached. The west winds which had been so deadly a hindrance on the voyage down the Koukdjuak in the previous autumn may have lightened the toil of working upstream to Lake Nettilling, and there they would have found compatriots engaged in the summer caribou hunt to help them through the pass to Kangianga and on the salt-water voyage to Blacklead.

Hantzsch's scientific collections were deposited in the Royal Berlin Museum, and survive in the Museum Fuer Voelkerkunde in West Berlin. The chronicle of his journey was put into typescript; a copy rests in the Public Archives of Canada. The original passed into the possession of Hantzsch's brother Hermann, who declared his intention of bequeathing it to a Dresden Museum. The present writer has been able to ascertain neither where it is deposited, nor what person or institution holds title to it. It is his opinion, endorsed by a Dresden correspondent who kindly attempted to trace it, that it was destroyed in the blitz of 1945.

The comparative obscurity which still envelopes Hantzsch is a major historical injustice. His Baffinland journey was unfortunate in its timing, so forfeiting the credit due to it. He began it when Cook and Peary were monopolizing the polar stage. When its result became known its glory was extinguished in the glare of publicity accorded the exploits of Amundsen and Scott on the south polar cap. The interest which his countrymen might have felt in so deserving a fellow-citizen was quickly diverted by the world catastrophe of 1914. Yet he is outstanding among travellers in the Canadian Arctic, not for his research and exploration, though these are significant enough, but for his portrayal of Eskimo life with which he so closely identified himself.◆

An early view c. 1840 of Sault Ste Marie where the Nolin girls lived until the family moved to Red River.

THE 'MISSES NOLIN' OF RED RIVER

By Donald Chaput

WHEN ANGELIQUE AND MARGUERITE NOLIN settled in the new Red River Colony in 1819, the hopes of Lord Selkirk, and later of Father Joseph Provencher were realized. Both men had expressed the view that these two young Métis women could make a valuable contribution to the intellectual life of the settlement. The opening chapter of the story took place on the south side of Lake Superior at Sault Ste Marie in the 1740s.

Joseph Victor Couvret, 'former voyageur', had settled at the small Sault post and in 1749 married Marie-Charlotte of the Ojibwa or Saulteux tribe. One of

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their children, born in 1753, was Marie-Angélique. Around 1770 Marie-Angélique married Jean-Baptiste Nolin, rising young merchant in the *pays d'en haut.* Their descendants were to become prominent in military, fur-trade, and Métis affairs over the next hundred years.

During the next ten years Nolin moved around the Upper Lakes, though working out of the Sault. He purchased the Michipicoten post from Alexander Henry but had only moderate success there. By the early 1780s he was permanently established at the Sault on the south, or United States side. He dealt primarily in furs but also provided fish for Mackinac, Detroit, and other settlements. Nolin was as prosperous as any French trader in the Upper Lakes.

John McDonald, an apprentice clerk to the North West Company, passed through the Sault in 1791 and recorded that Nolin and John Johnston were 'the principal persons here'. A few years later Nolin purchased a key tract of land on the Sault waterfront from four Ojibwa chiefs, who were possibly relatives of his wife. A further appraisal of Nolin's enterprise was provided by Gabriel Franchère, who stopped there in 1814. Franchère mentioned that the Nolins had three boys and four girls, 'of whom one is passably pretty'. He referred to Nolin as an important trader 'and in his home one sees large furniture and the marks of prosperity'. Nolin also owned a house and land on the Canadian side of the Sault, which he rented to Charles Oaks Ermatinger.

In the War of 1812 the Nolins, like most traders and Indians in the Upper Lakes, sided with the British. Jean-Baptiste was a militia captain, but illness prevented him from going on the assault against the United States troops at Fort Mackinac. However, his son Augustin Nolin was involved in the victorious attack and was praised for leadership of the Ojibwas under his command.

By this time, then, the Nolin reputation had spread throughout the Upper Country. Jean-Baptiste, a leading merchant in his own right, was the Sault agent for the North West Company. Sons Augustin and François were also 'in the trade', and son Louis was probably the best literate Ojibwa interpreter around Lake Superior.

Selkirk first met the Nolin family at the Sault and was impressed. After the War of 1812 he periodically suggested to Nolin that he move with his family to Red River. Nolin was a leading figure at the Sault and was reluctant to leave. However, his son Louis was hired by Selkirk as an interpreter and served at Red River for most of 1815-17. Louis assisted at the important Selkirk Treaty of 18 July 1817 with the Cree and Ojibwa at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine. Lord Selkirk referred to Louis as being 'intelligent'.

In the summer of 1818 Louis informed Selkirk that his father was finally considering the move from the Sault to Red River. Selkirk was delighted, writing to Alex McDonell that 'I conceive such a Settler must be a great acquisition.' Louis was already on the Hudson's Bay Company pay roll, and his brother Augustin had worked out a trading arrangement with Selkirk.

During the period of 1817-19 the Selkirk forces throughout the Upper Lakes tried to entice settlers to Red River. Selkirk personally approached potential settlers, while Robert Dickson spread the word among Frenchmen, Indians and Métis, in Minnesota and Michigan territories.

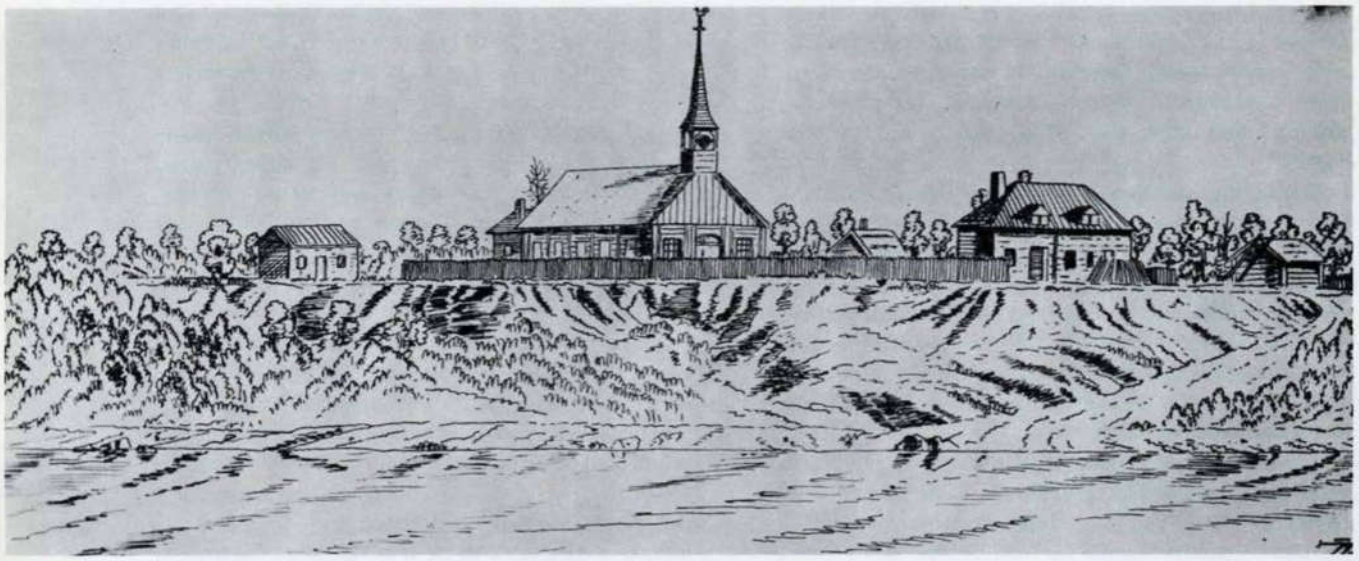
In August of 1818 Nolin wrote to Selkirk in Montreal stating that he would move to Red River provided that he could sell his Sault property at a decent price. He also insisted on a 'free hand' and financial assistance in setting up a trading post, as well as a sizable discount on trade goods. The Nolin family would need a village home 'as close to the church as possible' and room for a garden, stable, and other buildings.

Selkirk dashed off a quick reply to Nolin, agreeing in general to the demands. He then wrote to Governor James Bird, outlining in detail how the Nolin family was to be encouraged and helped. He praised the Nolin family and justified meeting the tough requests: 'As Nolin is the first to adopt it [the new settlement plan] he deserves the more favour.'

Before leaving for England in November, Selkirk wrote to Robert Dickson, reporting that one of the Nolin boys had recently left from York for Red River. The commitment from Nolin senior was now firm, and Selkirk's reasons were further amplified: 'I am particularly desirous that he should meet with no impediment in conveying in so fine a lot of daughters, who may help to fix some of our Meurons more firmly to the soil of R. R.'

In 1819 Jean-Baptiste Nolin sold his home, buildings, and property at the Sault to Charles Oaks Ermatinger and set off for Red River. The Earl of Selkirk died in 1820, but his promises were kept. Jean-Baptiste was granted three choice pieces of land in Assiniboia, and Augustin Nolin received one. Son Louis was still on the pay roll as an interpreter. The Nolins from the start were considered key people in the settlement. At a meeting at Fort Daer early in 1821, eighteen leading merchants and clergymen gathered to plan for defence of the colony and to pass a resolution of respect for the 'Memory of the late Earl of Selkirk, The Noble founder of this Colony'. Jean-Baptiste and Augustin Nolin were among the select group.

Much of the Red River settlement had been in the vicinity of Pembina, modern North Dakota. However, at this time two events occurred which shifted the population farther north. The North West Company had been merged into a larger Hudson's Bay Company, so the end of the rivalry meant that bases were no longer needed in or near the United States. And, it was finally determined that Pembina was in United States territory. In early 1823 most of the Métis from Pembina moved



MANITOBA ARCHIVES

The Nolin sisters opened the first school for girls in Western Canada in the log building to the right of the church, January 1829. From a sketch by Surveyor William Kempt, 1823.

north of the border, with many of them settling in or near St Boniface. So the Nolins, also, became part of the new Métis centre.

The two Nolin girls were in no way typical of the frontier. The girls, and a few of the Nolin boys, had had several years of schooling in Montreal in the 1790s, while the family resided at Sault Ste Marie. This kind of travel and education was available only to a few children of wealthy frontier merchants. (It is interesting to note that the children of another Sault Métis family were educated in Montreal at the same time, the boys and girls of John Johnston and Shagowashcodawaqua, daughter of a prominent Ojibwa chief.)

Selkirk had seen the need for religion and education in the Red River Colony and requested assistance from Bishop Plessis. In mid-1818 Father J.-N. Provencher, Father Sévère Dumoulin, and teacher William Edge arrived at Fort Douglas. Edge and Dumoulin went to Pembina, while Provencher worked in St Boniface.

Provencher, too, wanted an education centre for the Métis, but he had no teacher. However, he knew Angélique Nolin. In July of 1824 Provencher wrote to Jean-Baptiste Nolin, suggesting that Angélique start a girls' school in St Boniface. Jean-Baptiste refused, claiming that at his age (82), he needed his daughters to look after him.

Provencher, by now a bishop, was disappointed but kept insisting. In a letter of 1825 to Bishop Plessis, he complained that 'Old Nolin' was still an obstacle for the girl 'who burns with the desire to consecrate herself to God.' But there were other ways, and Provencher seems to have resorted to a mild sort of ecclesiastical bribery. On 1 August 1826, Francis Heron from Fort Garry wrote to James Hargrave, reporting that 'Old Nolin is at length become a *lodger* with the bishop.'

Apparently Nolin had other reasons for keeping Angélique away from the church. According to Provencher 'he does not wish that his daughter should be a servant. It is certainly not the status that I wish to give her.' Nolin resisted to the end. He died at Provencher's home in late August of 1826 at the age of 84.

With 'Old Nolin' removed, the plans for a girls' school were revived. Finally, in January of 1829, Angélique and her older sister Marguerite opened the first school for girls in western Canada, in St Boniface. The students were mostly daughters of French and Cree or Ojibwa parents, though some Métis of Scottish background also enrolled their daughters.

The Nolin girls stayed at the St Boniface school for the next several years and continued in their new profession for at least twenty years. By the early 1830s they were teaching at Baie St Paul (St Eustache). This phase of the girls' career is tied in with the life of Father Georges-Antoine Belcourt, who in 1831 became the first missionary on Red River to concentrate on the Indian, rather than the Métis population.

Belcourt was intrigued with Indian dialects, and he arrived in the country with at least a smattering of Algonkian. The Algonkian dialect was of the Algonkian linguistic division, which includes such groups as the Ottawa, Ojibwa, Cree, Illinois, and Potawatomi. Belcourt felt that a thorough knowledge of the language would enable him to succeed in working with the Cree and Ojibwa.

Bishop Provencher assigned the Nolin girls to assist Belcourt in learning the language and in communicating with the Indians. The choice was excellent; but it was the only choice. The Nolin girls were literate, educated Métis, fluent in French, English, Ojibwa, and Cree, and

experienced as teachers. Where else on the frontier at this time were such qualifications to be found?

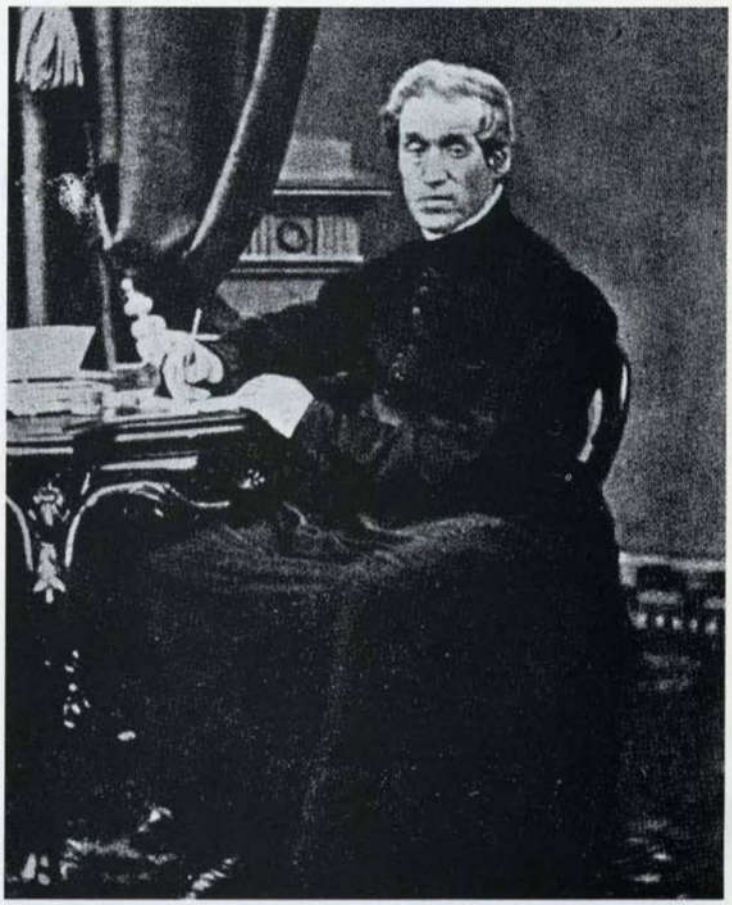
In 1834 Belcourt founded the mission for the Ojibwa at Baie St Paul on the Assiniboine. Angélique worked with the children, and helped Belcourt prepare an Ojibwa dictionary and school texts. Both girls worked with Belcourt most of the next decade. In 1849 Belcourt removed to Pembina, to work among the Métis of the United States.

Belcourt is remembered as an eminent scholar of the mid-nineteenth century who prepared dictionaries, grammars, and other works in Algonkian dialects. Yet, Father Belcourt's timetable would have been set back for years if he had not had the assistance of the capable and dedicated Nolin girls.

Angélique and Marguerite never married, being referred to in the various Red River censuses as the 'Misses Nolin'. From 1830 on, they usually had another sister living with them whose surname is unknown.

By the late 1840s the entire Nolin family was financially comfortable. Brother Augustin was a leading figure in the settlement and owned some choice property which he farmed; he died in 1848. By 1850 the 'Misses Nolin' farmed a few acres and had a substantial number of possessions that were the earmarks of success in the colony: horses, cattle, sheep, carts and a canoe.

Marguerite Nolin died in September of 1868, and Angélique in March of 1869. In 1869 their nephew Charles Nolin, son of Augustin, began his political activities by delivering a Métis protest to Governor William McDougall.



MANITOBA ARCHIVES

For more than a decade the Nolin sisters worked with Father Georges-Antoine Belcourt who prepared dictionaries, grammars and school texts in Algonkian dialects.

Charles Nolin, nephew of the 'Misses Nolin' and a Métis leader who became member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly for Ste Anne.

MANITOBA ARCHIVES

The pressing need for the Nolin girls as teachers diminished as the years passed. In 1844 the Sisters of Charity came to the Red River region, and in 1858 the Grey Nuns arrived. Although these groups had different attitudes, according to Bishop Taché they had one common goal: 'instruction des tribus aborigènes de ces vastes et infortunées regions.'

Beginning with the marriage of Jean-Baptiste Nolin and Marie-Angélique at Sault Ste Marie in the 1770s, the French-Métis Nolin family had risen rapidly in the socio-cultural society of the Red River frontier. The father and sons had distinguished themselves in trade, military, and political affairs, as the grandsons were to do.

But it was the activities of the Nolin daughters that made the family unusual. At ease in a milieu where French, English, Cree, and Ojibwa were spoken, Angélique and Marguerite Nolin were ideally suited to assist the Métis and Indians in the transition from a frontier community to life on the major east-west highroad of Canada. ◆

JAMES SUTHERLAND
INLAND TRADER
1751-1797

By Shirlee A. Smith

WHEN THE PRECURSORS of the North West Company expanded westward from Montreal the returns of the Hudson's Bay Company's Bayside posts decreased. The results can be seen in the ledgers from Albany. In 1763-64 the returns were 10,390 Made-Beaver, and ten years later the number dropped to 3,125. To meet the competition the Hudson's Bay Company initiated a three-pronged penetration from York, Albany, and Moose Factories. Many of the men who endured the difficulties of unknown waterways, badly built boats and canoes, leaking log houses, and near starvation are little known outside the H B C Archives. One of these men was James Sutherland, born circa 1751 and died 1797.

Sutherland joined the Company as a tailor in the summer of 1770, presumably recruited in the Orkneys by Captain Jonathan Fowler, Junior, Master of the Company's vessel *King George*. He was engaged for five years at eight pounds per annum and spent this period at Prince of Wales's Fort, Churchill River. He obviously had an independent turn of mind, for he refused to renew his contract at the same salary, and in 1775 he was ordered 'to return' by the Governor and Committee in London.

What Sutherland did after arriving in England is not known, but in February 1777, he was residing in the London parish of 'Saint Martin in the Fields', and 'Aged about 26 Years'. At this time he signed a second contract with the Company at 12 pounds per annum, ironically the salary he had requested in 1774. The circumstances of his re-engagement have not been documented but his return to the Company is mentioned in the Minutes; the fact that he was 'to Travel from the Factory to any parts inland for the better Discovery of the Country and improving the Trade', indicates that the Company was anxious to recruit inland traders. At the same time the Company engaged, as a labourer at eight pounds per annum, his brother Andrew who had previously served at York Factory.

Once again Sutherland sailed in the *King George*. The ship, delayed by ice and fog, was late arriving at the Bottom of the Bay. On 14th September Sutherland, with four other men, was put ashore at Moose Factory to assist with the delivery of cargo. Fourteen days later Thomas Hutchins, Chief at Albany, wrote in the daily journal: 'Received James Sutherland, Taylor'.

During the winter of 1777-78 Sutherland made two packet trips. He and James Chambers took the letters from Albany to Moose in December. In January,

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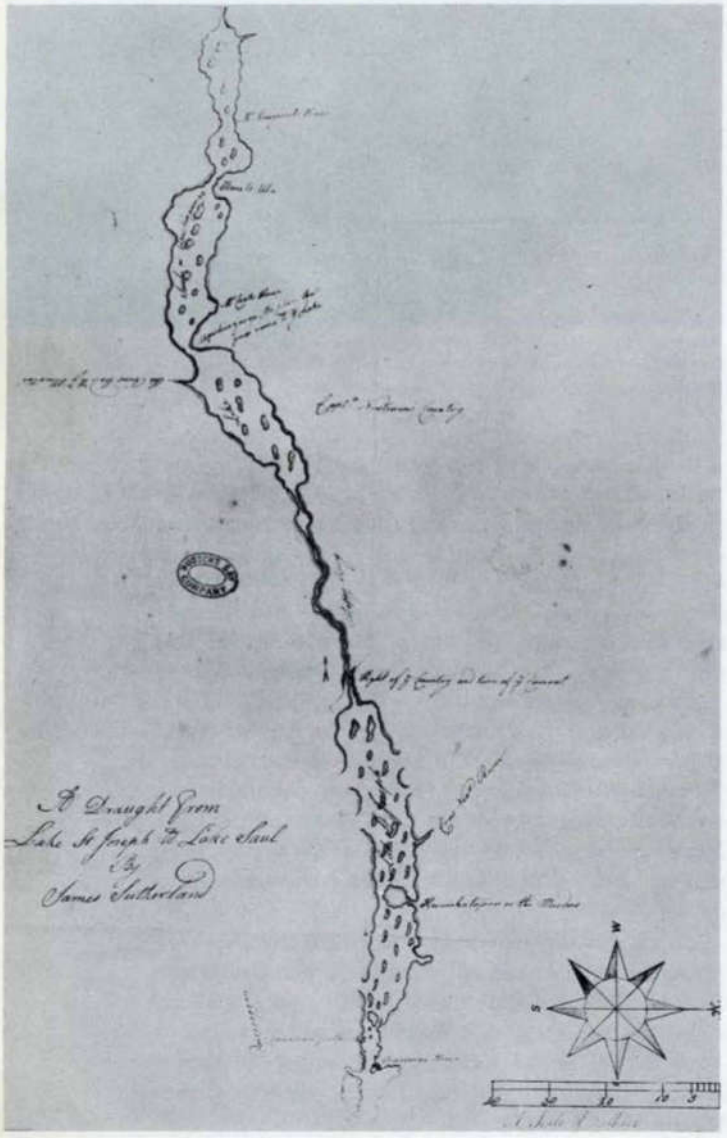
Mrs Smith is Hudson's Bay Company Archivist, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg.

Quotations from the H B C Archives are made with the permission of the Company.



James Sutherland's map of Lake St Joseph and Lac Seul from the H B C Archives.

HBC ARCHIVES

Fort Albany, from the Albany Fort Account Book, 1791-1792.

accompanied by two unidentified Indians, he travelled to Severn carrying letters for that post and also for York Factory and Prince of Wales's Fort. The men were back at Albany in early April. Inexperienced travellers did not carry the packet; Sutherland must have made winter journeys while previously stationed on the Churchill River.

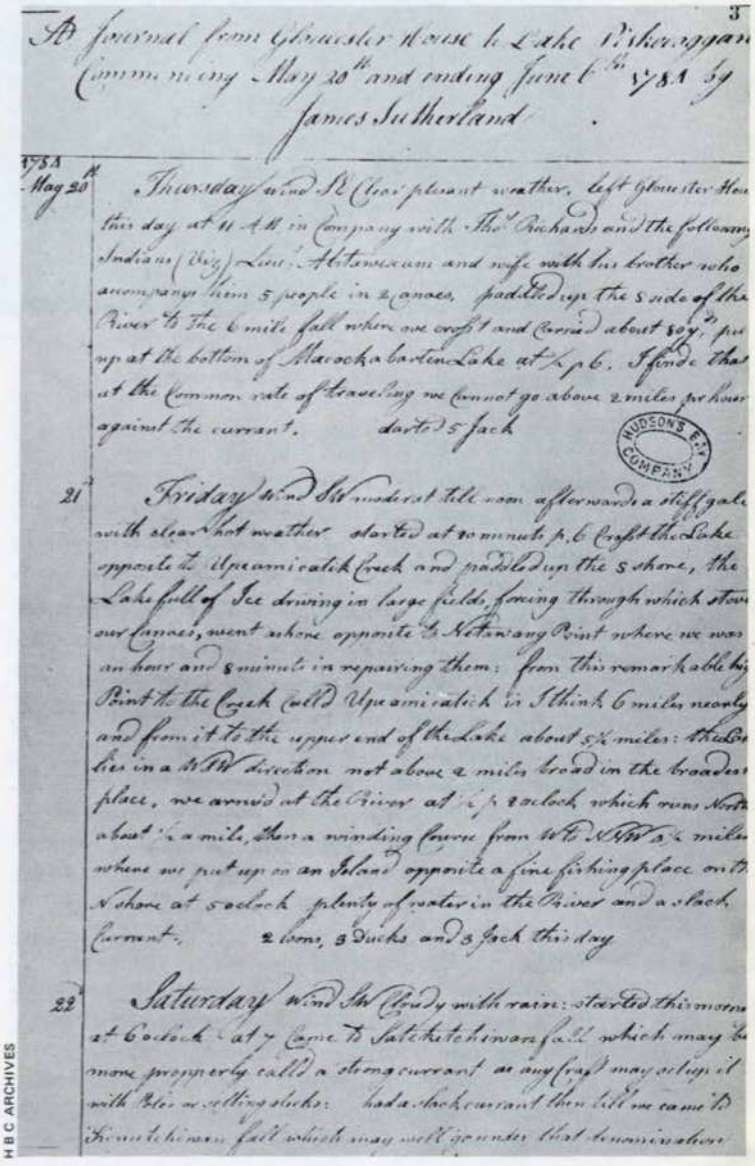
In the summer of 1778 Sutherland made his first journey up the Albany River. Travelling with seven men, trade goods, and provisions he left for Gloucester House, established the previous year by John Kipling. After a long arduous journey the men arrived on 18th August to find that a forest fire had been burning for several days. It came so close to the fort that the men were 'obliged to take everything out.' Heavy rains a few days later extinguished the fire.

John Kipling, Master at Gloucester, and James Sutherland, Second-in-Command, were to work together for ten years. From the journals it seems to have been a good relationship. Both were versatile men, accustomed to the hardships of inland travel, and eager to expand the Company's trade. It was Sutherland's ability as a canoeman, net-maker, hunter, carpenter, tailor, trader, and linguist which later prompted Robert Goodwin, Master at Osnaburgh House to write to John McNab, Chief at Albany: 'I was hardly able to dispense with [Sutherland he] having been of the utmost service during his stay with me, and I refer you to that Gentleman for Intelligence concerning the Inland business.'

Long 'conferences' with the leading Indians convinced Kipling that additional settlements should be made further inland. To obtain a better knowledge of the Indian country he sent Sutherland in 1784 to explore the track to Pishocoggan Lake (Lake St Joseph) and, if possible, to continue on to Lake St Anns (Lake Nipigon). Sutherland's journal of his two trips has survived in the Archives and is entitled 'A Journal of a Journey from Gloucester House to Lake Pishocoggan commencing 20th May and ending 6th June; Also a Journal from said Gloucester House to Lake St. Anns & Commencing 8th July and Ending 22nd 1784 by Jas. Sutherland.' It has a one-page 'Introduction' entitled 'Some Remarks Upon the Whole'. The courses and distances to Lake St Joseph and Lake Nipigon are listed.

On his first journey Sutherland travelled with Thomas Richards, and 'Lieut Abitawescum and wife with his brother who accompanys him five people in two canoes'. He gives a detailed description of the country through which he passed and includes the Indian names for the topographical features. He records seeing two old French houses. One he estimated to be about 45 miles from Gloucester; the other was at 'the river which leads to Eabemit Lake'.

The third page of Sutherland's 1784 Journal.



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A Journal from Gloucester House to Lake Pishocoggan
Commencing May 20th and ending June 6th 1784 by
James Sutherland

1784
May 20th Thursday Wind S.E. Clear pleasant weather, left Gloucester Hou
this day at 11 A.M. in Company with Thos Richards and 5 the following
Indians (Viz) Lieut Abitawescum and wife with his brother who
accompanys them 5 people in 2 canoes, paddled up the S side of the
River to the 6 mile fall where we cross't and Carried about 80 p. pu
up at the bottom of Macocka barren Lake at 4 p.6. I fonde that
at the Common rate of traveling we cannot go above 2 miles pr hour
against the current. dart'd 5 Jack

HUDSONS BAY COMPANY

21 Friday Wind S.E. moderate till soon afterwards a stiff gale
with clear hot weather started at 20 minute p.6 Croft the Lake
opposite the Upcamicalick Creek and paddled up the S shore, the
Lake full of Ice driving in large fields, forcing through which stove
our Canoes, went ashore opposite to Netawaney Point where we was
an hour and 8 minute in repairing them: from this remarkable
Point to the Creek Called Upcamicalick is I think 6 miles nearly
and from it to the upper end of the Lake about 5½ miles: the Lake
lies in a N.W. direction not above 4 miles broad in the broadest
place, we arrived at the River at ½ p. 2 o'clock which runs North
about ¼ a mile, then a winding course from W.N.W. 2½ miles
where we put up on an Island opposite a fine fishing place on th
N shore at 5 o'clock plenty of water in the River and a slack
Current. 2 loons, 3 Ducks and 3 Jack this day

22 Saturday Wind S.W. Cloudy with rain: started this morn
at 6 o'clock at 7 Came to Satchatchiwan fall which may be
more properly called a strong current as any Craft may setup it
with Oars or setting sticks: had a slack current then till we came to
Sacatchiwan fall which may well go under that denomination

HBC ARCHIVES

PAC

Sutherland would have visited Indian encampments similar to this one 'drawn from nature' by Peter Rindisbacher.

After travelling for 10 days Sutherland met 15 Indians with their women and children who had traded their furs at the Canadian house on Lake St Joseph. He stopped primarily to discuss matters of trade but the Indians regarded his visit as a ceremonial one. He was invited to take part in the 'Pipe of Peace' at the end of which 'one of the best dogs was killed for a feast, which is the grandest feast an Indian can make.' Sutherland recorded the Indian ceremony in his journal in careful detail. He was moved by the solemnity of it and wrote that Company men did not attach enough importance to it. Here, Sutherland shows ignorance of this aspect of the Company's operations. The Chiefs at the Bayside forts took part in all Indian ceremonies, including smoking the Peace Pipe before trading began.

Two days after meeting with the Indians Sutherland entered Lake St Joseph and arrived at the Canadian House on the same day. The master had left, presumably to go to Grand Portage or Montreal and a French free trader had been left in charge. He and Sutherland conversed in the Indian language, as Sutherland did not know French and the free trader did not know English. The unnamed trader gave Sutherland a draught of the road to Lake Nipigon; he was somewhat apprehensive of his action, saying that the master of the house would not have approved.

Sutherland described the Canadian House as a 'hogstie' and said he would have willingly set fire to it but 'that to do evil no good comes of it.' This impulse was not characteristic of him. Like many of the Company's servants and officers he resented the activities of the 'Pedlars' in Rupert's Land. As they were there, however, he thought they should be out-manoeuvered by the building of inland forts, the supplying of superior trade goods, and the maintaining of good relationships with the Indians. Violent impulses were not part of his make-up.

Sutherland left Lake St Joseph on 31st May. Two Indian girls offered to accompany him, but he had to decline 'as our canoe was too little.' Fish had been plentiful on the upward journey but on the return the men were hungry most of the time. On 5th June they paddled all day with nothing to eat, and on the following day Sutherland wrote that some of the sturgeon heads they had thrown away going up would now be welcome. They arrived at Gloucester on the 6th.

Travelling with Thomas Powel, 'Lieut Kieweoappo, his wife and brother-in-law', Sutherland left Gloucester on 8th July to journey to Lake Nipigon. It was not an easy route. The canoes were frequently 'lightned and lifted'; the water was low in the creeks, and hatchets were often used to hack off the undergrowth. Suther-

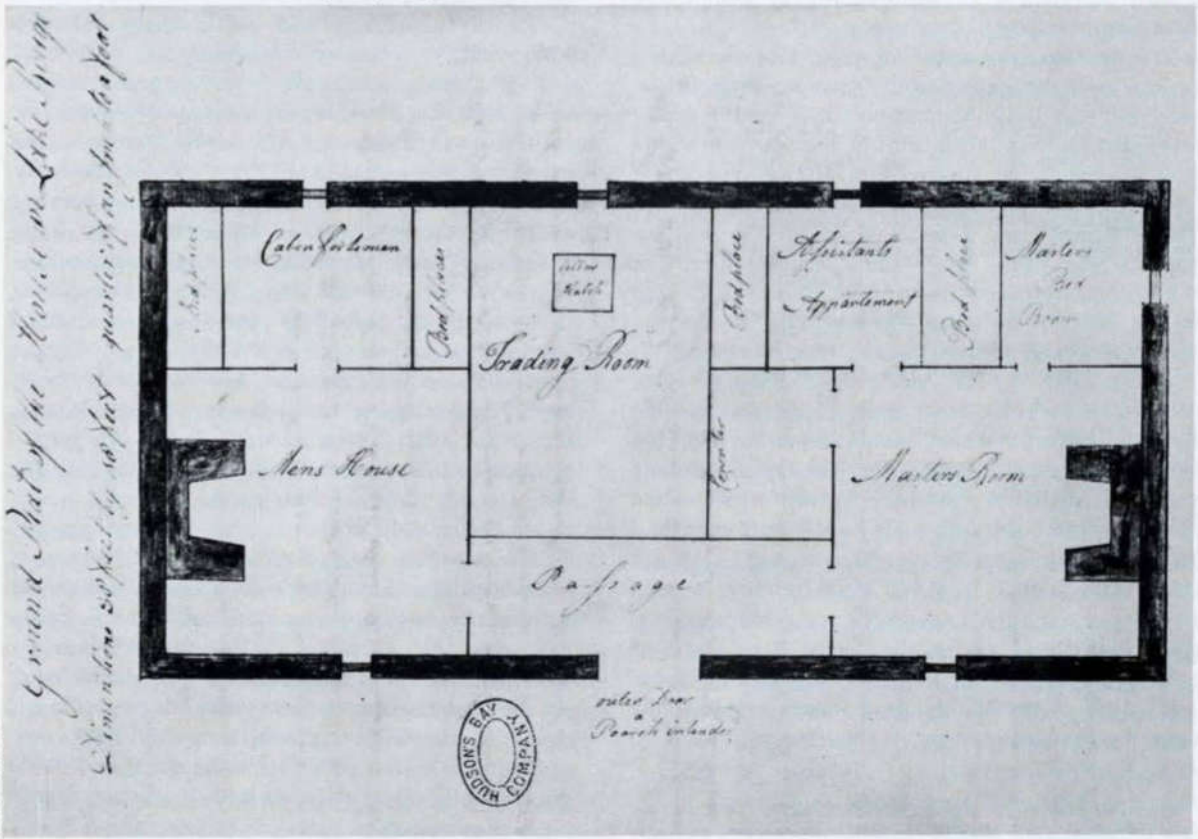
land's eyes were 'eat out with swarms of Moschittoes whilest the sweat blinds one in these long Carrying places.' On the 13th they crossed the height of land and on the 17th entered Lake Nipigon. Sutherland was anxious to visit the Canadian House which he judged to be about a two days' paddle across the lake. His Indian guide absolutely refused to go any further as his people were 'at variance' with the natives of the area. This was not the only disappointment for thick fog obstructed the view most of the time. The men were back at Gloucester House on 22nd July.

Two years after these journeys, in 1786, Sutherland explored the route from Gloucester House to Lac Seul. It too was a difficult voyage lasting 52 days but he still found time to write up his journal and do 'A Draught from Lake St. Joseph to Lake Saul'.

John Best had established a post on Lake St Joseph in 1786 and Sutherland was the assistant in 1789. The latter continued the westward expansion by establishing Red Lake post in August 1790. He left Osnaburgh House on 28th July with thirteen men in two bateux and a canoe laden with goods and provisions. Being a practising Christian, Sutherland petitioned 'the God of Heaven, without whose aid the labour of man is in vain [to] prosper the expedition.' On 13th August the men entered Red Lake and Sutherland selected a site for the post. Ten days afterwards they laid the foundation for a house measuring 38 feet by 18 feet. Sutherland was the Chief Carpenter and was frequently frustrated by having to oversee every stage of every job. He complained that the men were poor hunters, and knew little about net-making or building. His comments were probably accurate; but like many competent and versatile people he undoubtedly expected too much from his fellow men.

On 6th October Mr Cameron, a rival trader who had spent many years in the interior, arrived in a large canoe and built beside him. He was 'dres't fit to appear at court' and had a beautiful shalloon flag, and a brass blunderbuss which greatly impressed the Indians. The next day he invited Sutherland to dine with him. The dinner, also in 'court' style, consisted of soup, three choices of meat, cake, wine, and that great luxury, chocolate. Cameron's mode of living was on a grander scale than anything Sutherland had been accustomed to in the H B C service. He was mortified to think that he had neither forks nor knives and only one plate. Cameron outclassed him in numerous other ways. Sutherland wrote that his Indian 'Uniforms are far more ornamental then [sic] ours; their Orris Lace and Hatts much better and [there are] genteel buttons in their Cloaths.' Sutherland was not daunted. On 12th October he sat up 'Till 3 o'clock in the morning to make Indian

The floor plan of the 'house' at Red Lake built by Sutherland in 1790.



H B C ARCHIVES

Sutherland, recruited as a tailor in 1770, would have spent many hours making elaborate 'uniforms' such as the Indian leader wears in this early-nineteenth-century scene.

cloaths not having a coat to give an Indian.' The leading Indians expected to be outfitted with a uniform and these tailoring relations were important.*

The two men spent a pleasant winter. They were keen traders and reasonable men. Cameron, nevertheless, became annoyed when the Indians visited the H B C post before they had paid their debts to him – an attitude no sensible person could quarrel with. He was generally at the H B C house on Sunday when Sutherland performed 'Divine Service', and it was Sutherland who read the burial service when two of the Canadians died. The H B C men entertained their rivals on Christmas Day and on the 26th the invitation was returned. The day finished with a dance to the music of a Canadian fiddler.

In the spring of 1791 Cameron, who knew the route better than the H B C men, delayed his departure from Red Lake so that Sutherland could accompany him. The two groups travelled together for nine days. Sutherland was deeply moved by Cameron's 'genteel behaviour and obliging nature'. He could offer no payment except his verbal gratitude. On 12th June he arrived at Osnaburgh House with a cargo of 2,400 Made-Beaver – a good return for a newly established post. The following winter Sutherland was on the English River where he built a post on 'Lake Burdingno', modern-day Ball Lake.

The endeavours of the inland traders were carefully noted by the Governor and Committee in London. In 1792 they wrote to John McNab at Albany saying they were particularly pleased with 'the conduct and assiduity' of James Sutherland; and in that year he was made a member of the Albany Council.

In 1793 Sutherland established Portage de l'Isle post on the Winnipeg River. He did most of the finishing on the house and commented with satisfaction that it was so well built that water did not freeze indoors. Obviously, some of his previous winter habitations had not been too warm. On 26th September Sutherland's competitor Charles La Tour of the North West Company appeared. Two days after La Tour's arrival Sutherland wrote: 'Mr. La Towers Brandy cock still running and exceeds all I have yet seen at any of our Settlements . . . '. Such generosity to entice the Indians to trade was not necessary. The Nor'Wester had a better selection of trade goods: his cloth was a more vivid red; the pointed blankets had three bars of blue, green and red; and he had a fine assortment of china beads.

Yet Sutherland managed to keep on good terms with his rival who had built his house only 100 yards away and whose quarrels with his men were loud and violent. Sutherland refused to harbour the North West Company men, even when they begged to be allowed to engage with the H B C. It was a diplomatic move, but he could not have done otherwise. He was short of provisions and clothes for his men, being badly in need of slops (coats and trousers), soap, and sugar. In the spring of 1794 he left for Osnaburgh with 1,500 Made-Beaver and a runlet (cask) of castoreum.

For a description of the H B C Indian uniforms at York Factory see The Beaver, *June 1947.*

That fall he took charge of Osnaburgh House at a salary of 70 pounds per annum. The original buildings had been temporary ones. Now the foundations were rotten and the men's house had 'taken a keel'. With his orderly ways Sutherland could not tolerate such poor living conditions. During the winter the men were sent into the forest to cut logs. The buildings were rebuilt and repaired and a new palisade was put up. A flagstaff 70 feet high was erected with the help of the Nor'Westers, and the flag edged with 36 yards of lace. Potatoes were planted (there being no other seeds) and a good crop harvested. The winter of 1795-96 was so severe that they froze in the cellar – the first time that this was known to happen. In addition to the extra work around the post Sutherland was concerned about the threatening trading methods used by his rival trader, Sancarte. The Indians, knowing that they could play one group off against another, were becoming intractable. Sutherland lamented the fact that he had no Bible, having left his at Portage de l'Isle. It is hoped that he had his 'Dr. Johnson's English Dictionary' and 'Bell's New Pantheon or Historical Dictionary in 2 vols.' – books that he had had sent out from London at a cost of eight shillings, and two pounds two shillings respectively. In a period when a labourer earned eight pounds per annum, books were expensive.

John McNab, Chief at Albany, travelled to Martin's Falls in the summer of 1796 where he held a council with the inland traders. Sutherland was asked to take charge of Brandon House situated on the Assiniboine River. He left Osnaburgh on 1 August 1796 with 21 men and four bateux to travel to his new posting. On the 26th they entered 'the grand Winnipeg' Lake. While the bateux were rowed up the Assiniboine River Sutherland walked along the bank. After the rocky Shield country, with its tortuous island-filled rivers, the prairies had a deep effect on him. On 31st August he wrote:

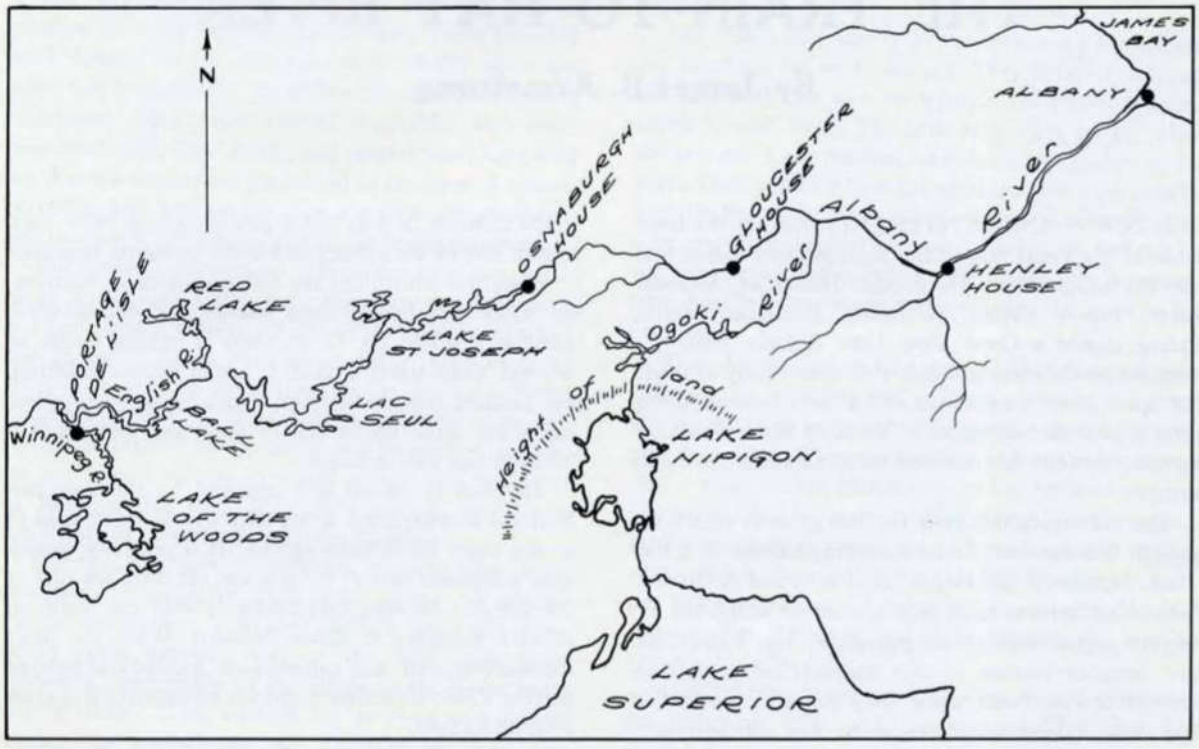
> Travelled all day through beautifull plains which only wants the hand of industry to make this one of [the] finest countries in the Universe no clearing of ground wanted; but the Plow to till and the Scythe to cut the finest Hay; the woods along the River is still large and thick.

He arrived at Brandon House on 13 September. In the Journal for 27 April 1797 he was reported as 'very sick'. He died two days later and was buried on 1 May. His death was attributed to the improper use of Dr James's Powders – a diaphoretic (causing perspiration), purgative, or emetic according to the dose prescribed.

At his death Sutherland possessed 1,050 pounds in Consolidated Bank of England annuities which produced 31 pounds ten shillings annually. His two brothers, Robert and Alex, inherited his savings.

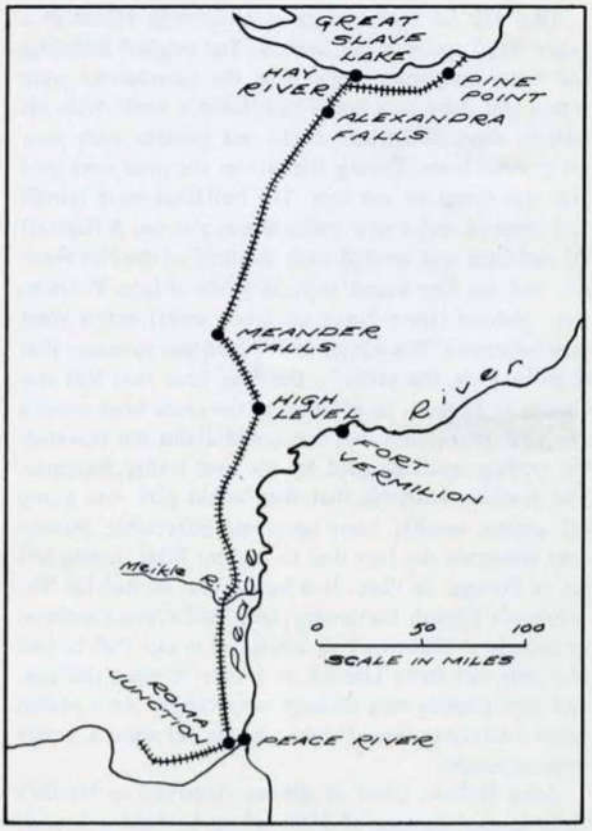
It is not known when Sutherland formed a liaison with an Indian woman. Mention is made of his children in a letter to Alex Sutherland from the Company Secretary in London. The Secretary suggested that the children remain in Rupert's Land and that the brothers arrange to send them an annual allowance through the Company.

Sutherland's premature death deprived his Indian family of a husband and father, and the Hudson's Bay Company of a worthy officer. ◆



To satisfy his keen interest in railways and their history, the author has ridden many miles of rail in remote areas.

Photographs are by Mr Armstrong.



THE TRAIN TO HAY RIVER

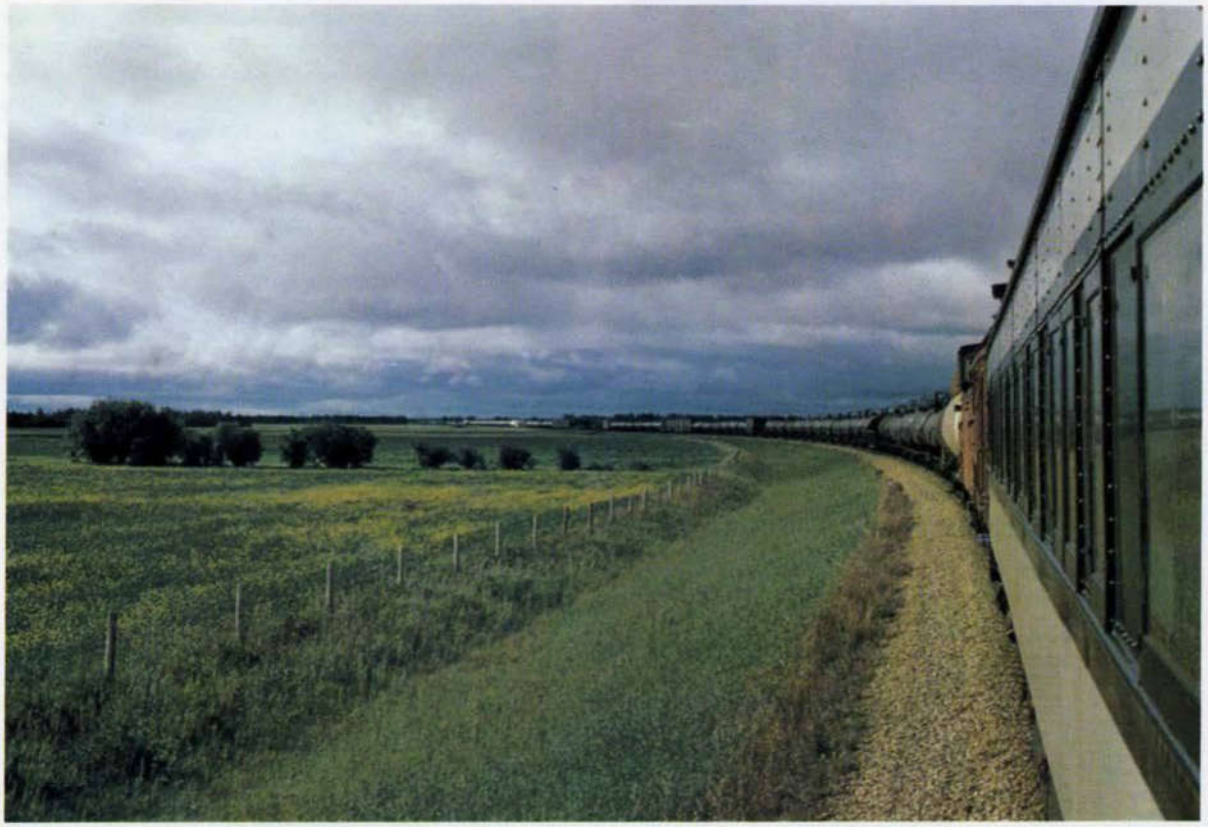
By James B. Armstrong

THE TOWNS AND SETTLEMENTS listed in the timetable of the Great Slave Lake Railway have names that stir the imagination: Deadwood, Hawkhills, Meander River, Indian Cabins, Grumbler, Enterprise, Birch. Riding aboard a Great Slave Lake Railway train one must be on the alert to catch a glimpse of any of them, for apart from a signboard and a weed-covered siding there is little that distinguishes Métis, or Slavey Creek, or Lutose, from the vast northern wilderness that surrounds them.

The railway, which runs for 380 miles in virtually a straight line between Roma Junction, Alberta, and Hay River, Northwest Territories, does not, and could not, exist to serve these small places, some of which are too tiny to appear even on the provincial map. Rather, the line operates because of rich lead-zinc mines that are located at Pine Point, some sixty miles to the east of Hay River. Great quantities of ore and concentrate – 6,709 carloads, or over half a million tons, in 1974 – are hauled out of Pine Point and down to Roma Junction.

While ore constitutes the railway's primary business, its trains also handle large amounts of Arctic-bound gasoline and fuel oil. In all, there is enough traffic to warrant three trains a week in either direction. During the summer, when additional freight heads north, these trains are made up of 100 or more cars and measure better than a mile in length.

The line is owned and operated by the Canadian National Railways and technically should be referred to as the Great Slave Lake *Branch.* It is generally considered a separate entity, for it is cut off from the rest of the system; its only connection is with the Northern Alberta Railways at Roma Junction. While the line's locomotives, cars, and cabooses are painted and lettered for the CNR, its isolation gives it an identity and character all its own.



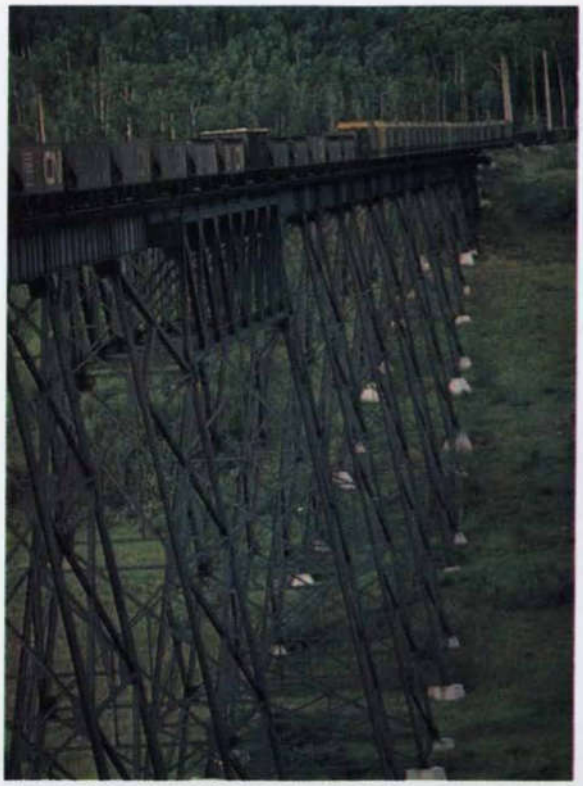
The southbound train rounds a curve at milepost 44, approximately 44 miles north of Roma.

The journey between Roma Junction, a collection of railroad tracks and maintenance sheds half-way between the towns of Peace River and Grimshaw in western Alberta, and Hay River, a bustling town on the shores of the Great Slave Lake eighty miles above the Alberta-Northwest Territories border, is an uneventful affair that takes between twenty and twenty-two hours to complete. The only stop along the way is at High Level, 180 miles north of Roma Junction, for a change of crews. For veterans of the run, the ride is predictable, perhaps even monotonous, but when officials of the line granted me permission last summer to ride up to Hay River and back, I travelled half-way across the continent to accept their offer.

On a visit to the regional headquarters of the Canadian National Railways in Edmonton shortly before departing for Roma Junction I was told that I was to be accompanied on my journey by an official of the Great Slave Lake Railway, Bill Harmon, the trainmaster and acting superintendent, and by his wife, Donna. As I filled out forms and signed releases I learned that the three of us would be travelling aboard the railway's business car, a rare piece of rolling stock, the mere mention of which conjured up visions of comfort and luxury.

A business, or office, car is an elaborately equipped passenger car operated by a railroad solely for the benefit and convenience of its officials. As I learned upon my arrival in Roma Junction, the one owned by the Great Slave Lake Branch is a splendid specimen of this unusual breed. An open-platform observation car that has survived from a more elegant age, it is equipped with a small but complete kitchen, a dining-room, a handful of bedrooms, and, at the rear, an attractive and comfortable lounge. Painted smartly in grey and black, it was easily visible as it stood near the southern end of the yards, tagged onto a long freight train. Immediately ahead of it was an elderly and somewhat dilapidated box car which, I learned, carried an electric generator that supplied it with lights and power. This car, in turn, was coupled to a caboose, in front of which stretched a long line of oil- and gasoline-laden tank cars that had been delivered that morning by the Northern Alberta Railways' tri-weekly train. Ahead of the tank cars was a seemingly endless string of empty hoppers and gondolas bound for the mines at Pine Point. In all, there were 113 cars. Up at the other end, out of sight, stood the four 1750-hp diesel-electric locomotives that would pull the train up to Hay River.

Shortly after five o'clock we were ready to go. As with any train of considerable length, there occurred at the time of our departure what is known in the trade as 'taking out the slack'. Since a railroad car's couplers are not rigidly fastened to the chassis but have a certain



A view of a section of the imposing steel trestle over the Meikle River.

amount of give-and-take, or 'slack' to them, there is a brief delay between the time the engine begins to roll and the moment the car behind it starts to move. After this car has begun moving, there is a similar lapse before the one behind it moves, and so on down the line. Because railroad cars are heavy and often ungainly, it is generally true that those further back in a train are not so much pulled as they are yanked forward into motion; indeed, at the time of a train's departure it is not unusual to hear a series of loud reports moving down its length as each car is jerked ahead. When the cry of 'Highball!' came over the radio-telephone, the Harmons and I braced ourselves. Instead of a jolt and a snap, however, the business car was drawn forward smoothly and quietly – an action which clearly revealed a practiced hand on the throttle up in the cab over a mile away. 'Just like No. 1, Stevie' Mr Harmon called over the Motorola, complimenting the engineman, Frank Stephenson, by comparing our departure to that of the Canadian National Railways' crack passenger train. In doing so, he also let Mr Stephenson know that the entire train was moving and that he could now begin to pick up speed.

Speed is a relative term when used in reference to the Great Slave Lake Railway. Trains travelling over the line are restricted to a maximum of 30 mph, primarily

The train, named for its lead engine 'Extra 4150 South', at Pine Junction.

because at such a speed the possibility of a derailment – which could prove disastrous for the single-track line – is minimized, but also for the simple reason that there is little need to hurry.

Immediately upon leaving Roma Junction, or Roma as the railroadmen call it, northbound trains must contend with a slight climb for a half-dozen miles as the railway makes its way out of the Peace River valley. Once they have gained the crest, they can easily maintain the half-mile-a-minute clip, a speed which permits a leisurely inspection of the rich farming country that stretches from Roma all the way to High Level. While the growing season here above the 56th parallel is short, the land is fertile and the crops that are grown are of a high quality. In addition to the countless acres of durum wheat and barley that line the right-of-way, fields of clover abound, and along their edges stacks of beehives can often be spotted. This part of Canada is the self-proclaimed honey capital of the world and beekeeping plays an important role in the operation of many farms.

What is undoubtedly the most impressive moment in the journey comes a few miles north of Hotchkiss, a small community seventy miles north of Roma. Here the railway is suddenly confronted with the deep, wide valley of the Meikle River, a tributary of the Notikewin, one of the many rivers that flow into the Peace. Although the Meikle is little more than a wide stream and measures only fifty miles from its source to the spot where it joins the Notikewin, its valley is hundreds of feet deep and many hundreds of feet wide. To get the railway across it, an elaborate steel trestle had to be built. Constructed partly on a six-degree curve and measuring 1,730 feet in length – with timber approaches of intricate trusswork that total an additional 400 feet – the trestle is an imposing structure and a noble engineering achievement. It is of such size that forty- and fifty-foot-long freight cars are dwarfed as they rumble slowly across it. Almost as quickly as they have appeared the valley and its awesome trestle vanish, replaced by the flat Alberta countryside.

Compared to most railroads, the Great Slave Lake Railway is a mere youngster, having been in operation for little more than a decade. As a result, its history is brief and pleasantly uncomplicated. Begun in early 1962 and completed less than three years later, the line was built primarily to haul ore out of Pine Point, but also to serve Hay River, and, indirectly, the entire Arctic. That it was constructed so quickly is remarkable when considered in the context of the northern environment. During the winter of 1963-4, for example, workmen were faced with temperatures that fell as low as forty-five degrees below zero. Nevertheless, on 18 November 1964, the railway's first revenue-producing run, a train of thirty-six cars laden with ore bound for a smelter in British Columbia, departed from Pine Point. Although the railway cost some $75 million to build, recent tests have revealed that forty million tons of the lead- and zinc-rich ore still exist at Pine Point, an amount that should keep the trains running for many years.

The view from the business car. The dials above the window on the left indicate time, speed, and air brake pressure.

About the time our train was passing through Keg River, sixty miles north of Hotchkiss, the Harmons and I sat down to dinner. Like the rest of the car, the dining-room was spotless, complete with freshly laundered linen and brightly polished silverware that bore the distinctive CNR emblem. The cramped quarters of the kitchen clearly had presented no problems to my host and hostess, who prepared an elaborate dinner of pork chops, potatoes, and numerous vegetables and side dishes. Outside, the skies that had been threatening all evening finally broke, and as we rolled on into the gathering darkness the rain began to beat heavily against the windows; the car, with its comfort and warmth was probably the only vestige of civilization for miles and miles around.

Since I had been a guest at dinner, I was placed in charge of the cleaning up. The car did not have its own heating equipment so all the water used in washing the dishes had to be heated on the stove. Once it was ready the job went quickly and the three of us were back in the lounge reading and relaxing by the time the train began to slow down for High Level. A few minutes later as members of the crew prepared to detrain, Mr Harmon and I went out on the back platform and lit the markers (the small red lanterns that are used to identify the last car of a train) and hung them from brackets on the rear

end of the car. Although the next northbound train would not be leaving Roma for almost forty-eight hours, the markers had to be lit to comply with the rules of the railway. When we were finished, it was time for bed and the Harmons and I retired to our spacious, comfortable rooms for a long and pleasant sleep.

I awoke the next morning as we were passing milepost 250, half-way between Slavey Creek and Lutose. The land had changed considerably. No longer were there cultivated fields and neatly fenced-off pastures. Here was the real North, a vast, lonely, and forbidding land, intruded upon only by the railway's thin slash of roadbed, disturbed only by our train's momentary presence. Although it was already eight o'clock, we had travelled a mere seventy miles from High Level. Clearly, the southbound train we had been scheduled to meet there had arrived late from Hay River. The delay worked in our favour, however, for it enabled us to travel through this fascinating, desolate land by daylight.

It was a while before the Harmons arose and I spent the time in the front vestibule of the car, leaning from the dutch door, watching the muskeg and jack pine roll by. The weather, I learned, can change abruptly. Just as you become accustomed to the sun glistening off the rails it ducks behind a bank of clouds and a few drops of rain fall; then, just as quickly, it pops out again and the tamaracks and junipers sparkle with water.

A couple of hours later, mid-way through a bacon-and-egg breakfast, we passed milepost 300 and crossed over the 60th parallel into the Northwest Territories. The rugged, unpaved Mackenzie Highway, which runs only a stone's throw away at this point, has an information centre and camping grounds at the border for the hardy souls who venture this far north on their vacations. Beneath the Territories' official emblem, a polar bear surrounded by a circle of blue, stood a couple of trucks and a handful of cars and campers, some heading north towards Enterprise and Hay River, the others on their way back south.

After the dishes had been washed and put away, I got my camera and stood on the back platform for a while. As I walked through the lounge Mr Harmon reminded me to be sure to hold onto one of the grabirons since a sudden snap or jerk, the effect of one hundred cars' worth of slack action, could give me a tumble or even pitch me over the railing.

Once the door to the car had closed behind me, the only sound I could hear was the constant clickety-clack of the wheels as they passed over the rail joints. It occurred to me that at the time of its construction the line might have served as a testing ground for joint-free welded rail, for concrete ties, and for other recent innovations in the design of track and track-related structures. The remoteness of the line, its relatively low volume of traffic, and the extreme variation in weather conditions (the area experiences fluctuations of as much as 130 degrees during the course of a year) precluded

At Pine Junction, thirty-five cars loaded with lead and zinc are switched to the southbound train.

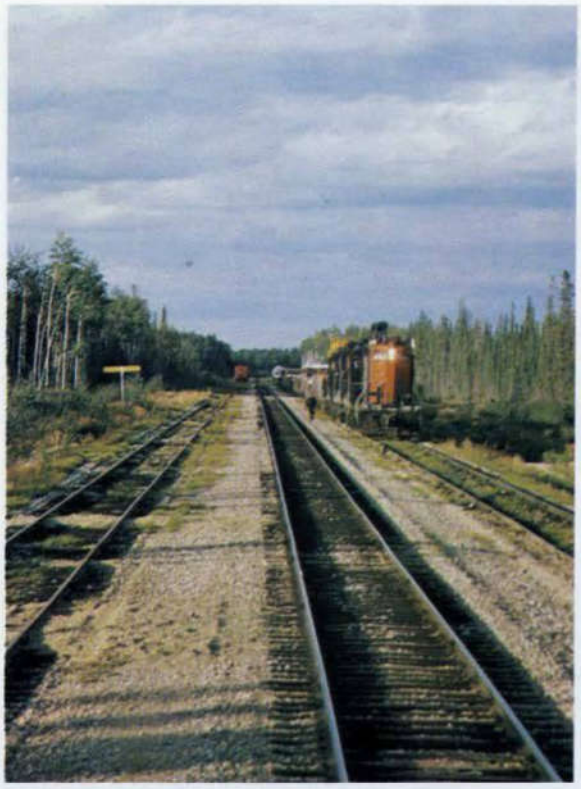
The southbound train at Pine Junction, with a long string of empty tank cars and the business car at the rear. Bill Harmon is at the window.

such experiments. Instead, the railway was built according to time-proven methods, on wooden ties with standard 85-lb and 100-lb rail that came second-hand from other parts of the Canadian National Railways system.

Among the line's more modern features is its set of automatic hot-box detectors, devices that monitor the trains to determine whether any of the cars have overheated wheel bearings. Located at regular intervals over the line, these detectors help prevent costly derailments and eliminate time-consuming inspections by the crew. Their information is registered on an elaborate machine in the dispatcher's office at Roma and is then relayed to the train's crew over a microwave telecommunications system used by the railway and by Alberta Government Telephones.

Part way between Grumbler and Alexandra Falls we ran into some more rain, but by the time we had reached Pine Junction, eight miles south of Hay River, the sun was shining brightly. At the junction, where the fifty-five-mile line to Pine Point branches off, we paused briefly to set out the empty gondolas. While they were being shunted onto a siding, Larry Turner, one of the local employees, stopped by the car. As did all the railroadmen we met, he greeted the Harmons by their first names and inquired for other members of the family. He said that Hay River had been having a spell of cool, damp weather, a sharp contrast to the hot, dry, dusty conditions of a normal summer.

Indeed, temperatures in Hay River have been known to climb into the 90s, and a day in the mid-80s is not



uncommon during July or August. The town often goes without rain for weeks, or even months, on end; in 1972 a drought that began after the final snowfall was not broken until early autumn. The year before, a similar dry spell resulted in a devastating forest fire that started south of Pine Junction and spread as far as the outskirts of Hay River; the path of its damage could still be seen. Such disasters seem to be the rule rather than the exception in this part of the North. The worst, however, occurred during the spring of 1963 when the town, then located on Vale Island which sits at the mouth of the Hay River, was badly flooded. The island was declared a disaster area and, following the establishment of the residential area on the mainland, was rezoned exclusively for commercial and industrial purposes.

As a result, Hay River today has two distinct personalities. One is that of the mainland settlement, a modern, carefully planned area that has a small hospital, schools, municipal offices, a hockey arena, RCMP headquarters, and a thirteen-storey high-rise apartment building, surely the only structure of its kind within a radius of five hundred or more miles. The other is that of Vale Island, a haphazard collection of brand-new warehouses and abandoned, flood-ruined buildings, of storage tanks and maintenance sheds, of bustling docks and crowded wharves. It is in this part of town that one comes face-to-face with the frontier of the 20th century. Here technology and commerce reign supreme, amid the discards of the obsolete and the inefficient. It is a harsh, unattractive landscape, but it is one that is charged with energy and vitality and self-confidence.

Hay River has grown rapidly during the past decade and now has some 5,000 inhabitants, more than 10% of the population of the entire Northwest Territories. Although it stands in the middle of a vast wilderness, the town can lay claim to such amenities as daily bus service (15¾ hours, $31.55) and daily plane service (1¼ hours, $63) to and from Edmonton, CBC television (beamed in live from Vancouver, B.C., via satellite), a couple of weekly newspapers, and numerous indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, among them, a dance hall, a theatre, a swimming pool, and a baseball park.

The Harmons and I learned these and other facts about the town from Bernie Plaquin, an employee of the Great Slave Lake Railway who lives in Hay River with his wife and children and who acted as our guide during our day-and-a-half visit. A cheerful, outgoing man who is endowed with that rare adult gift of curiosity – as well as with the knack of arousing it in others – Bernie has compiled a vast amount of information on the Northwest Territories and, in particular, on Hay River.

The first and most interesting stop on our tour of Hay River was at the docks on the eastern side of Vale Island. Here, between early May and mid-September, there is a furious amount of activity as barges are loaded with every conceivable item and commodity. They are

COMINCO LTD.

A rail car with lead or zinc concentrate is closed at Pine Point Mines with a cover of moulded fiberglas to protect its load from rain.

bound for settlements and outposts scattered about the Northwest Territories: Snowdrift, Reliance, Fort Good Hope, Arctic Red River, Paulatuk, Coppermine, Gjoa Haven. Since no roads penetrate the tundra farther north than Yellowknife or farther west than Fort Simpson, all supplies bound for the Arctic must be delivered by water. As a result, during the summer months, strings of

Hay River: a partial view of the freighting centre on Vale Island from atop a gasoline storage tank. Aerial to right marks CN Telecommunications building.

heavily laden barges depart regularly from Vale Island. While a few are delivered to settlements around the Great Slave Lake most are hauled down the Mackenzie River by powerful diesel tugs. Some end their journeys at Inuvik, in the Mackenzie Delta, or at Aklavik, but others travel hundreds of miles farther, to Cambridge Bay, for example, on the southeastern edge of Victoria Island, or on through Queen Maud Gulf to Spence Bay, a settlement of 200 persons on Boothia Peninsula. This latter outpost is so remote, and so far north, that only one delivery is made by the barges each year. This is done usually in early September, when the ice has at last become rotten enough for a tug to break through it.

It seems ironic that millions of gallons of gasoline, heating oil, and aviation fuel should be shipped over 900 miles from Hay River up to the Mackenzie Delta, an area rich in oil reserves. Untapped or untreated petroleum is of little use in Fort McPherson or Inuvik, so while various oil companies conduct extensive explorations, load after load of fuel is brought up from the south in the holds of the barges. Above decks, a more interesting and varied assortment of freight is displayed. We saw piles of dry goods that had been shrink-wrapped, or enveloped in water-repellent, air-tight cocoons, prefabricated sections of houses, plastic cisterns, pieces of drilling pipe, and even a brightly painted fire engine headed for Inuvik. Although most of the barges return empty to Hay River, some carry loads of concentrate down from the mines in the Great Bear Lake region.

As we visited other parts of Vale Island, Bernie told us that prior to the railway's arrival and the subsequent transformation of Hay River into a transportation centre, the town's major industry was fishing. It remains an important facet of its economy, especially among the Indian and Métis population, and each year more than four million pounds of whitefish, walleye, and pickerel, lake trout and inconnu or coney, are taken commercially from the Great Slave Lake. The whitefish and trout are of particularly good quality and usually are shipped to the New York and Chicago markets. Understandably, Hay River attracts a large number of vacationing fishermen: lake trout weighing as much as eighty pounds have been caught in the Great Slave Lake; northern pike of thirty pounds are not uncommon, and some of the largest arctic grayling of record (up to five pounds) have been taken near the town.

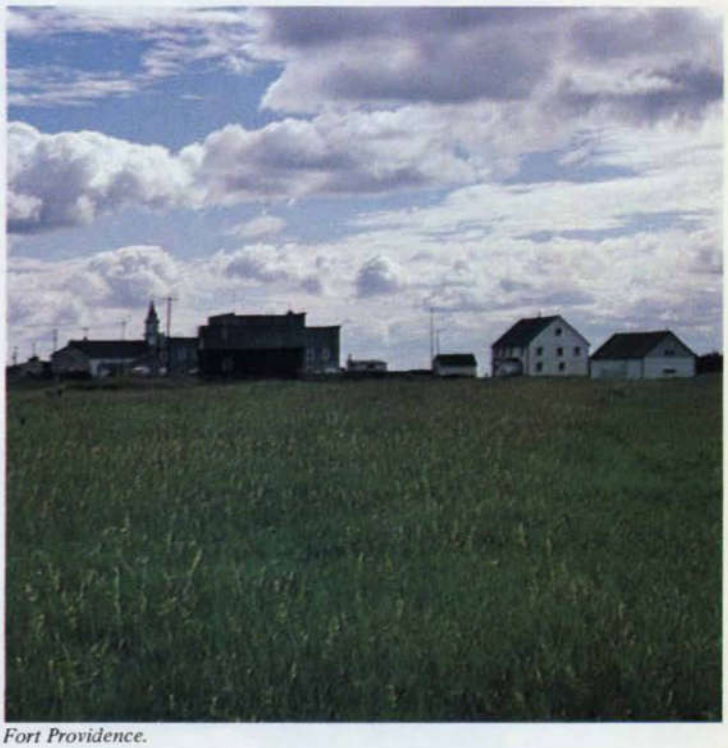
After returning to the business car which had been set out on a siding at the edge of the yards on Vale Island, the Harmons and I again enjoyed an elaborate and leisurely dinner. Since I wished to see the northern lights about which I had heard so much, I stayed awake later than the others, waiting patiently for darkness. It arrived, finally, sometime after eleven, and with it came the aurora borealis. The summer show is far less spectacular than the winter display, but I felt well rewarded by the misty, pale-green light that swirled and streaked across the sky. Subtle and constantly changing, the soft, diaphanous light can easily mesmerize one who is unacquainted with or unprepared for its simple beauty. Had my visit to Hay River coincided with the summer solstice I would have missed the lights entirely, for although the town lies south of the Arctic circle, and is not truly in the land of the midnight sun, the sky over it remains light throughout the night. Indeed, a traffic ticket once handed out at 12:55 a.m. on a June night described the conditions as 'dusk'.

Early the next morning, Bernie, the Harmons and I rented a car from one of Hay River's three agencies and set off to see some of the surrounding country. Since our train was not scheduled to leave until the evening we followed our guide's suggestion and drove out to Fort Providence, an Indian village on the banks of the Mackenzie River about 100 miles west of Hay River. It was a hot, dusty ride, highlighted by a glimpse of a black bear loping off into the trees by the side of the road, and by a visit to the remote and lovely Lady Evelyn Falls on the Kakisa River. Located a few miles off the highway, and often bypassed by tourists, Lady Evelyn Falls are not particularly large – they measure only forty-eight feet in height – but are unusually symmetrical, describing a slight but almost perfect arch. We were fortunate in the timing of our visit for just as we arrived the sun broke from behind the clouds and set rainbows sparkling in the mist at the top and at the base of the falls.

Our journey over the Mackenzie Highway was for the most part uneventful. There is little variation in the land, and communities are few and far between. Fort Simpson-bound motorists are warned at Enterprise that there are no service stations (and no settlements) for the next 244 miles. Any trip over the Mackenzie Highway is also somewhat uncomfortable, for whether one is head-

ed for Fort Simpson, Fort Providence, or all the way around the lake to Yellowknife, one must contend with the dust. It is a fine, powdery dust that lingers in the air long after a car has passed. It works its way into every crack and crevice so that even within a tightly sealed vehicle a thin layer soon covers everything and everybody. When it is stirred up it is so thick and so opaque that overtaking is impossible. It is also illegal, except on the infrequent sections of road that have been treated with calcium chloride, a moisture-absorbing, dust-inhibiting substance. Unfortunately, owing to high costs, only one mile in every thirty can be treated in this manner. Dust is, in fact, so dominant a characteristic of travel in this part of the North that the captain of the Mackenzie River ferry is able to check for business by scanning the horizon with a pair of binoculars: if he sees a cloud of dust he knows that a car or truck will soon be at the slip, and so delays his departure for the other shore.

By the time we had returned to Hay River our train had been made up, and shortly after climbing aboard the business car, we were on our way back south. Again we stopped at Pine Junction, this time to pick up thirty-five cars that had been loaded with lead and zinc and brought down from the mines earlier in the afternoon. As was originally envisioned, Pine Point Mines Limited has proven to be the railway's most important customer. While the initial agreement between the company and the railway called for a minimum of 215,000 tons of ore and concentrate to be shipped each year for a period of ten years, recent outputs have been more than twice as much, and on occasion have exceeded 600,000 tons. (Some of the concentrate is destined for places as far away as Japan and India.) Although the train the Harmons and I were riding consisted primarily of tank cars, the shipment of oil is a seasonal business, and over the course of a year ore cars outnumber tank cars by a margin of almost two-to-one.



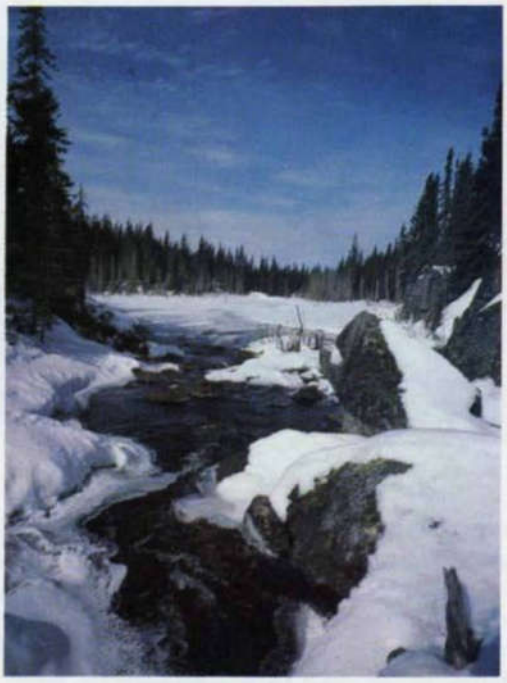
Fort Providence.

A marker, one of the red lanterns that identifies the last car of the train, hangs on the back platform of the business car.

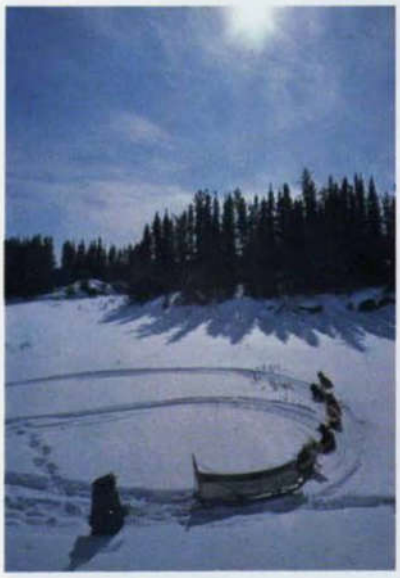
The switching at Pine Junction was accomplished quickly, but once it was done we had to wait for over an hour while the air pressure in the brake lines of our 112-car train built back up to operating levels. Dinner that evening was prepared without the rocking and swaying we had grown accustomed to on the north-bound run.

By eight-thirty we were on our way again. Sitting in the lounge, we were soon overcome by the soothing, rhythmic clickety-clack, and, well before the light had completely left the sky, retired to our rooms. When we arose the next morning, we found that the train's steady, unvarying, thirty-mile-an-hour pace had carried us back down to cultivated land. As we rolled on through Manning, past Deadwood, and on to Leddy, we breakfasted, cleaned up, and packed our bags. Then, just before noon, with barely a trace of clanking or banging, the engineman brought us to a stop at the edge of the yards at Roma. ◆

LIFE ON THE LAND



Lake and bush country north of Elbow Lake in northern Manitoba.



HENRY BRADLEY of Cranberry Portage is one of some 4,000 licensed trappers who still 'live on the land' in the lake and bush country of northern Manitoba. From November until the ice breaks up in the spring, Bradley, now 56 years of age, makes regular rounds of his trap line, covering about fifteen miles on a normal day with his dogs. His area takes in all of Elbow Lake and extends north – about 200 square miles in all.

The conservation officers who know Bradley respect him for his industry and integrity. They say that he likes the solitude of the land and has a special feeling for the animals that live there. He knows his wildlife through long and observant association and has developed some theories of his own about conservation. If Henry Bradley

Photographs by A. McTavish

The workshop and shed (left) where fish and wood are stored.

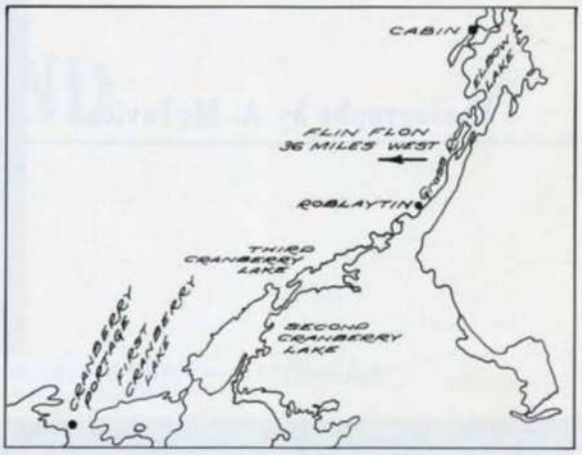
Across frozen Elbow Lake by carriole and dog-team.

The carriole covered with heavy canvas was made by Bradley for travel through the bush.

had his way, the conservation officers say, he would do something about the 'trophy' season for moose that opens September 15 and lasts for about a month. The hunting disrupts the breeding pattern, says Bradley, and as a result some calves are six weeks younger than they should be when they have to face the winter weather and the wolves.

When the pressure of the trap line eases, Bradley works around his camp. He has three neat, sound log buildings – two of them built since he took over the line from trapper Brydon Ashdown in 1966.

In a normal winter Henry Bradley will clear about $4,000 on furs. He will take some mink, lynx, timber wolves, bears, a wolverine or two – but mainly beaver, from 100 to 175 in an average season.



For a fast trip to Cranberry Portage, Bradley uses his skidoo.

Hot cakes and syrup begin a day on the trail.

Alan McTavish is a Winnipeg photographer with an interest in the people and landscapes of the northern bush.

The shed stocked with frozen fish for the dogs.

PETER PITSEOLAK

ARTIST AND AUTHOR

By Dorothy Eber

EARLY IN THE SUMMER of 1975 Dr William Taylor, Jr, director of the National Museum of Man, Ottawa, returned from England with an important addition to his museum's collection of Eskimo art: a series of water-colours painted in 1939 by Peter Pitseolak of Cape Dorset for a man he called Johanassie Buchan. Perhaps the earliest water-colours to be done by an Eskimo artist, the collection was transferred to the National Museums by the present Lord Tweedsmuir, the same Johanassie Buchan who, in 1938-39 while his father was Governor General of Canada, worked as a trader at the Hudson's Bay Company's post in Cape Dorset.

Peter Pitseolak did not live to hear that his water-colours would return to Canada. Nor did he know that a filmstrip entitled 'My Escape from Death' created from drawings made in the last year of his life and with a sound track based on his own syllabic account of being lost at sea in the ice floes, would be released in the autumn 1975 by International Cinemedia Centre Ltd., Montreal, the group who filmed *Duddy Kravetz*. It was also uncertain at the time of his death whether the book on which he and I collaborated, *People from our side* (Hurtig 1975) with 127 photographs taken between 1942 and the early 1960s and developed by Peter Pitseolak and his wife, Aggeok, in igloo, tent, and hut, would ever see publication. Another unanticipated event was the recent release by the productive West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative of a series of lithographs rendered after Peter Pitseolak's drawings. Wally Brannan, director of the newly organized lithography project, saw a store of Peter Pitseolak's drawings, dating in some cases from the start of the Cape Dorset graphic experiment in the late 1950s. He found them particularly suited to the lithographic process, and became increasingly captivated by the manner in which Peter Pitseolak used his camera as an aid to drawing. He began to think of him as Cape Dorset's first pop artist.

Despite the releases of Pitseolak's work during the recent months the only recognition he received during his lifetime appears to have been a small show of his photographs organized by the National Film Board in 1973 and the publication of several photographs in *The Beaver*.

Dorothy Eber of Montreal is author of 'Pitseolak: Pictures out of my Life' based on interviews with the woman artist Pitseolak Ashoona. She prepared the oral biography for Peter Pitseolak's 'People from our side' published by Hurtig of Edmonton, 1975.

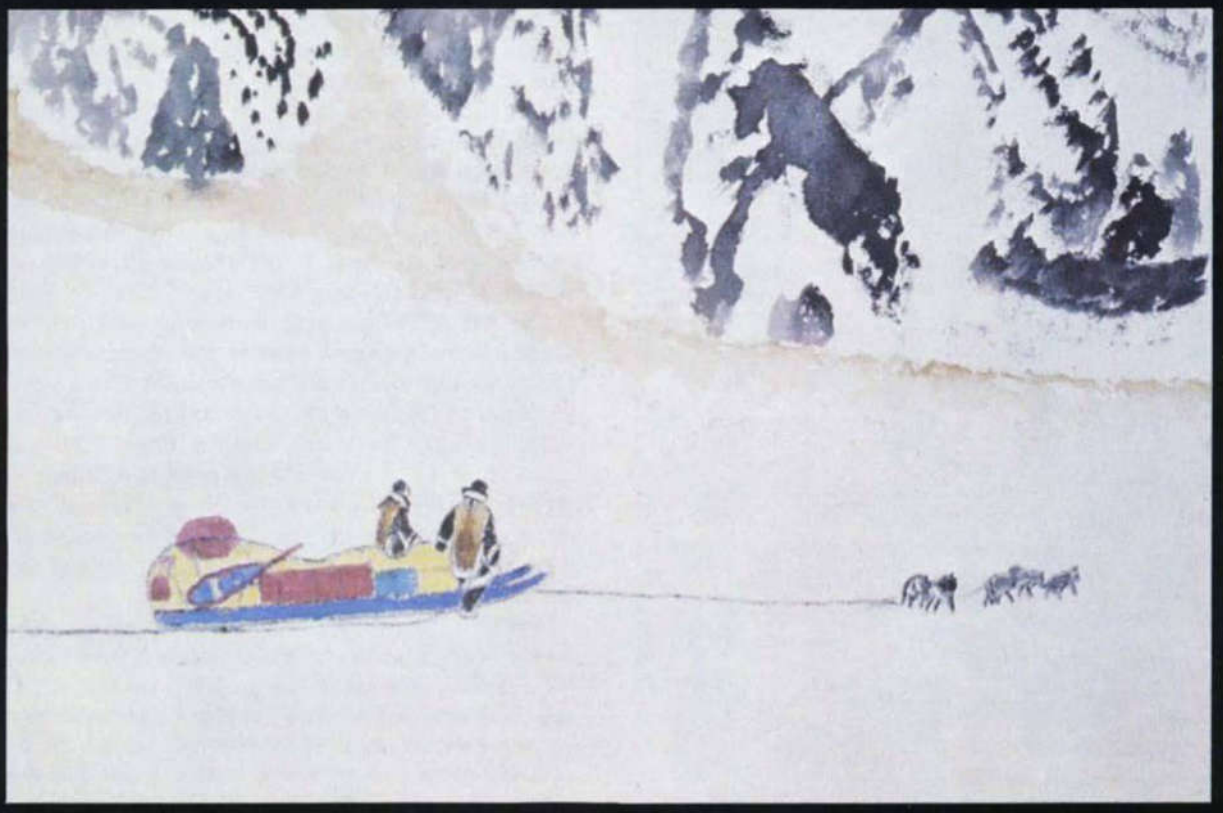
Peter Pitseolak, I think, had a reasonably good opinion of his own abilities and he enjoyed using his skills. When Queen Elizabeth visited Frobisher Bay in 1971 he decided that the people of Cape Dorset should make a presentation, and on his own initiative he stepped forward with three drawings by himself showing old Eskimo life, two of his own photographs of himself and his wife in skin clothing, and a tape of old Eskimo music he had recorded. 'The Queen wrote that she liked them very much' he remarked with satisfaction.

Recently I suggested to interpreter and translator Ann Hanson who worked on *People from our side* that the early art work, the photographs, and the photographic involvement in the drawings had made Peter Pitseolak important to the history of the Cape Dorset graphic experiment. It was unfortunate, I said, that he had not lived long enough to enjoy his new status. She answered simply 'He was important enough.'

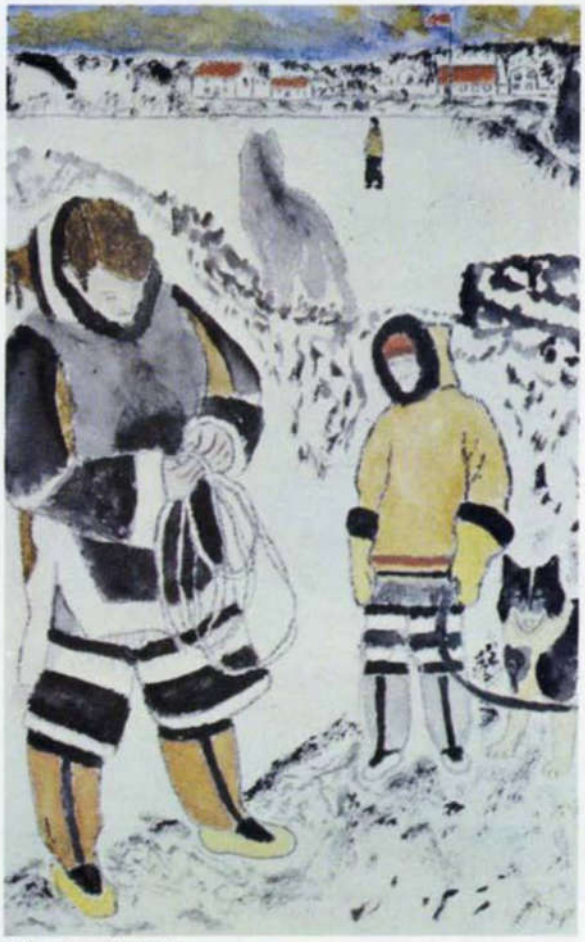
Peter Pitseolak was indeed a person of power on south Baffin Island and was well aware of the fact. A man of hot temper, he was not universally loved but his leadership qualities, his drive, and special talents, made him immensely respected. He was born in 1902, and by birth was a member of an Eskimo élite. His father and grandfather were both powerful leaders and he was brother, and sometimes rival, to Pootoogook, remembered in south Baffin Island as the 'Eskimo king'. At various periods Pitseolak was right-hand man both for the Hudson's Bay Company and its one-time competitor, the Baffin Trading Company. He owned his own Peterhead boat, was boss of Keatuk, the camp where ten families lived under his leadership, had two trapping areas and kept twenty dogs – enough for two teams. He was rich and powerful.

In one area Peter Pitseolak was particularly far-sighted. At a relatively early point in time he knew that Eskimo life, as he understood it, would disappear. 'The world should know about the Eskimo ways we had' he told me 'because the Eskimo language is disappearing.'

With an eye on posterity Peter Pitseolak made collections of old Eskimo songs; he recorded on tape accounts of important happenings – the sinking of the *Nascopie*, for instance; he kept notebooks and he kept a diary. 'I keep putting down what goes on from day to day so that my grandchildren will know what happened when I was alive.' After the print-making experiments got underway in Cape Dorset in the late 1950s he contributed to the project many drawings which are also magnificent records of Eskimo life and its legends. He incorporated



Scenes of family life from the Tweedsmuir collection of water-colours done by Pitseolak in 1939.



'Johanassie Buchan'

in his work as well southern motifs that struck his fancy. Some of his male sea spirits sport what Wally Brannan terms 'the sophisticated razor cut of the '50s'. Peter Pitseolak may have seen this style on male models in the magazines that were part of the Christmas air drop in the days before modern runways and the Twin Otter opened up the North. Another series of drawings owes its inspiration to a flag bearing the H B C coat of arms, which came into Peter Pitseolak's possession and which he used as a backdrop in some of his photographs. In a sequence of drawings he made use of the coat-of-arms design but replaced the rampant caribou with sea goddesses.

Quite a few of Peter Pitseolak's drawings appeared in the yearly editions of Cape Dorset graphics but it is probably in the new lithographs rendered after his drawings by Kiakshuk Niviaksee (a son of the early print-maker Niviaksiak who died after a mysterious encounter with a bear) and in the drawings themselves that his work of the print-making period will show to advantage. It is likely that his position among the Cape Dorset graphic artists will be reassessed once collectors become familiar with the new lithographs and with the charming early water-colours painted for Lord Tweedsmuir.

I found out about the water-colours almost by accident. Before leaving for Cape Dorset to interview Peter Pitseolak for the oral-biography part of *People from our side*, I had done research in the library of the Arctic Institute, looking for material that would help me in question-asking. I came across Lord Tweedsmuir's *Hudson's Bay Trader*. It had a text which made considerable mention of Peter Pitseolak and other personalities of the Cape Dorset area. It had something else, too – a section of photographs. When I produced the book during one of our interview sessions all work stopped. Grandchildren gathered round and Peter Pitseolak looked through the picture pages intently. 'There's even a picture of Etidluie's dog' he remarked. He asked if I could leave the book with him for a few days so he could show it to other Eskimo people. Although he made no mention of the fact, one of the pictures showed Annie, his first wife and the mother of his daughters. I wondered if he had a picture of her, for she had died before he bought his camera.

When I picked up the book he surprised me by saying he had seen it before; he had, I gathered, tried to buy the Catholic missionary's copy. The book was out of print and mine was a library copy so I said the thing to do was to write to Lord Tweedsmuir in care of the publisher to see if an extra copy existed. It was then that

Peter Pitseolak and his wife Aggeok in 1972, the year before his death.

DOROTHY EBER

A summer scene of caribou grazing in the hills, a 1939 water-colour by Pitseolak.

he remarked in a matter-of-fact way 'I sold my first drawings to Johanassie Buchan.'

He described the pictures as being of 'hunting and people and animals'. 'I did them in colour' he added. 'I drew them first with a pencil and then filled in with a little brush – the way the children do at school.'

Apparently in Cape Dorset at that date only Peter Pitseolak and school children had tried their hands at the difficult medium of water-colours.

He described Lord Tweedsmuir as 'a good man for paying'. 'Some people ask the price and then beat it down. Johanassie Buchan never asked; he only paid.'

The letter dispatched in care of the publisher resulted in a book being sent to Peter Pitseolak by return mail. And Lord Tweedsmuir kindly sent me photographs of the earliest of the water-colours and the following additional information.

'Pitsulak was the best carver on the coast, as well as one of the ablest and most distinguished of the Eskimos. My mother had given me a sketch block, and a paint box. I was sitting in the Post one winter's day, trying to paint a picture of the other side of the harbour and the pale glow of a winter sunlight, when Pitsulak came along and asked me what I was doing. Except for a few illustrations in the *National Geographic Magazine*, of which we had a few copies, he would never have seen a picture.

'I explained to him that I was trying to put the winter sun down on paper and showed him how you held the brush, then dipped it in water and looked for the appropriate colour. After some thought he said what I was putting down on paper didn't seem to him to resemble the sky. Rather testily I replied that he was welcome to try and do better himself, and gave him the paint box and block. He brought the block back in the summer with every page covered with the most remarkable paintings.'

'After seeing these first efforts' Lord Tweedsmuir wrote 'I sent a radio message outside to my mother to send up a big block of proper artist paper and a really big paint box, on the annual ship. I went off in the ship when it arrived, to join up for the war, which was just about to start.

'Two years later, I received Pitsulak's paintings.'

Lord Tweedsmuir mentioned in his letter that it was 1962 before he had a chance to get back again to Cape Dorset. His visit was brief and although he had a few words with Pitseolak they were not very satisfactory. He felt that perhaps Pitseolak did not remember him. On this point Lord Tweedsmuir was mistaken. As soon as Pitseolak opened *Hudson's Bay Trader* and found the picture of the author, he said with warmth 'That's my friend – Johanassie Buchan.'

Bush Wife

By Eileen Williamson

In 1962 when Eileen Williamson moved to Springdale, Newfoundland, and saw community news items posted on a central tree, she founded and edited the 'Springdale News'. Her bi-weekly newspaper expanded to cover 26 towns and outposts around Notre Dame Bay and when she left the area in 1969 it had a circulation of 7,000. Mrs Williamson now lives in Toronto.

DURING THE DEPRESSION years, my husband John suggested that I leave Regina with our two-year-old son, Bob, and spend the winter with him at Casummit Lake in Northern Ontario. John had discovered gold there on a prospecting trip in June 1928. His father, George Williamson of Regina, had optioned the claims; a plant had been assembled at the site and a shaft was sunk in July 1931. When financing became a problem the work came to a halt, but John was to stay on the closed-down site until further money could be raised.

I was happy at the thought of leaving Regina – a depressing city in those grim years of drought in the thirties. Rain had not fallen on the prairies, it seemed, for years. Every time a breeze blew, the dust rose in clouds; even the snow during the winter was blackened with dust. The sun rarely penetrated the murk. We drove our cars in the daytime with the lights turned on, guided by the telephone poles beside the road. Whole fields were blown away and fences buried beneath the fine dust. It blackened our faces as we walked down the streets: it gritted between our teeth and clung to our hair. Babies died of pneumonia from breathing it.

The Williamson family – John, Eileen and Bob – meet the plane that brought supplies into the Casummit Lake mine every two or three months.

Then in the summer of 1932, the grasshoppers moved in – great black clouds of them stripping the few trees that the prairies had and clogging the radiators of cars. Roads were so slippery with dead bodies that cars would skid off them into the dust at the side.

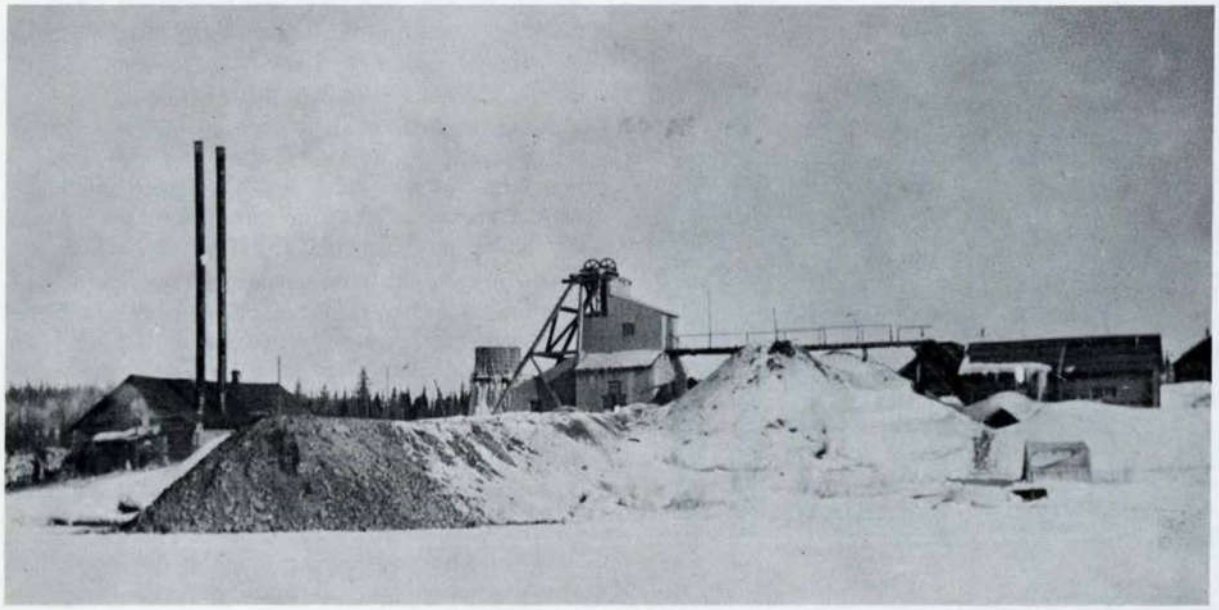
It was with a feeling of relief that I packed a few belongings for myself and my son and took the train from Regina to Sioux Lookout in August 1932. From Sioux Lookout we were to fly north into Ontario's bush country. Freight on the plane was expensive, so I was not to bring an ounce of unnecessary luggage. No toys were included for Bob – only a few of his books of nursery rhymes and fairy tales.

We arrived at Sioux Lookout at two in the morning and spent several hours in a room at a small, noisy hotel. At noon when the sky had cleared we took off for the north in a German Junkers Flying Boxcar. Bob and I, sitting on a seat fastened to the floor, were locked in with the freight, luggage, and an enormous canoe. As the plane rose into the air, the canoe slid down on us and I spent the rest of the flight pushing it out of our way and mopping up Bob who was air sick.

After a two-hour stop at Gold Pines where the pilot left us to deliver mail, freight, supplies, and the canoe, we took off again for the mine. When the plane banked for its descent to Casummit Lake, I saw John paddling out to where we would touch down on pontoons. He helped to tow the plane towards the shore, and then he and the pilot unloaded the supplies.

'Stay and have a meal with us' John said, but the pilot was anxious to get back before dark. He said that he would see us again in two or three months, and took off across the lake.

The three of us made our way up from the shore to the cook-house where John had decided we would live. It was an enormous building made of logs. At the back an area partitioned off for the kitchen contained a stove about twelve feet long and an immense table. John had baked for our arrival and had evidently used a recipe for quantity cooking for the entire table was spread with 'rock cakes', appropriately as hard as rocks and covered over with clean tea towels.



The Casummit Lake Gold Mine, 1932

The dining-room part of the cook-house seated sixty men. John had divided it into bedrooms and a living area where a huge oil-drum stove was throwing out a good heat.

By this time, little Bob was exhausted. We fed him, bathed him and put him into bed. It was wonderful to have him breathing in the clean, fresh, pine-scented air of the northern bush at last.

The cook-house was one of a row of buildings perched on a hill overlooking the lake. These included bunk houses for the men who were needed when the mine was in operation, an office, the mine shaft, and a storehouse filled with canned vegetables and fruit, powdered milk, dried fruits, and corned beef. John told me that we would have fresh food in the form of moose, partridge, fish, and berries from the bush. He also planned that we would plant a garden for fresh vegetables.

Our resident companions at the mine were two pigs, a horse, and a little husky pup. The horse was anti-social and had already tried to eat one of the miners. John had had to go to Swain Post about forty miles away to radio for a plane to fly the man to the hospital in Sioux Lookout. I tried to make friends with the horse and offered him home-made candy, but he seemed to hate me and would roll his eyes and appear mad whenever he saw me. He liked little Bob though, and stood motionless as a statue when he was around.

The two pigs were inordinately friendly. They soon developed an uncanny sixth sense about my whereabouts; every time I stepped outside the cabin they would come galloping out of the bush, always in optimistic expectation of something to eat. I was terrified of them. They were as big as cows and always jostling one another and me. The plan was that they were to produce many little pigs so that there would be bacon and pork chops when the mine started up again, but nothing ever happened. I think that they were both of the same sex.

There were various other people in the area – Swedes and Irishmen, mainly working their claims or waiting for the mine to start up again. They did not have a cent of money, but they would chop wood in return for flour, sugar, tobacco, or tea from the mine stores.

The only other family in the area was a bush cook, Joe Stocking, his wife, and son. They lived ten miles up the lake and one day we went in the motor-powered canoe to visit them. The little wife wept for joy when she saw me. I was the first woman she had spoken to for years. Their good-looking son, aged ten, was a remarkable boy. He had never been to school, had never seen a car, train, movie, restaurant, or even a door-knob, but still he was completely self-sufficient. He could skin a moose, trap, handle a dog-team, and race over the snow in his bare feet.

While Joe regaled us with stories of his experiences in the bush, his wife prepared a dinner of moose and green tomato pie. The walls of their log cabin were hung with deer hides and all their moccasins and parkas were deerskin – sewn by Mrs Stocking after her husband and son had helped her with the tanning. She had a flourishing garden and gave us quantities of fresh vegetables from it when we left. Soon after our visit Mrs Stocking and her son left the bush and I never saw them again. She had decided that the time had come to take the boy to Toronto for schooling.

After I'd been at the mine for a few days, coping with the enormous stove and gigantic pots and pans, big enough for an army, it occurred to me to wonder about

Bob on the cook-house step, and some of the men who were working claims in the area.

the laundry facilities. John assured me that it was no problem. He put a small stove outside and produced a tin wash-tub and a washboard – a piece of equipment I had never used before. I heaved in all the sheets and towels and boiled everything. This back-breaking job took an entire day and John was exhausted from lugging pails of water up from the lake for the washing and rinsing.

'After this, I'm going to wash a few things every day' I told him. I saw his face blanch.

Baths were taken in the same tin wash-tub, either outside or in the kitchen as the days grew colder. Usually a bather had a bit of warning when guests were on their way, for a canoe could be seen from some distance across the lake.

After being in the bush for several weeks, I decided that I could not face another baking-powder biscuit and that I would have to learn how to make bread. I knew nothing about baking, but on the theory that anybody can cook if they can read a recipe and follow instructions, I pored over the one cook-book in the kitchen. I could not imagine what 'kneading' dough was, and I had never seen anyone bake bread, but I plunged in.

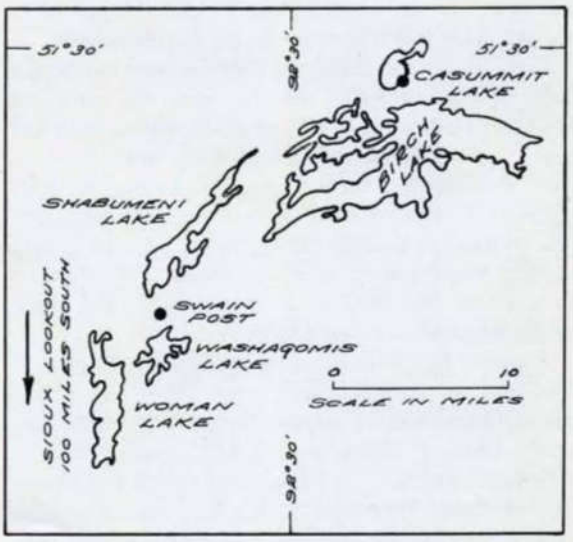
At the end of the day, dazed with exhaustion and despair and trying to cope with the dough which spread like molten lava all over the huge table, I managed to gather it together, with my hands cemented together like mitts, and get it into a couple of loaf pans. Then I discovered that I had forgotten to put wood in the stove, so that the fire was out just at the crucial moment when the oven should have been at 400° F. In my efforts to get it going in a hurry, I stoked up the fire. Clouds of black smoke engulfed the kitchen and poured out the door. John came racing in from the bush thinking the place was on fire.

Eventually the bread was brought from the oven – a sorry-looking lump of grey dough that had not risen an inch. It had a crust like cast iron and it took all of John's muscle to cut the loaf in two. He gnawed at his half while I worked at biting through the crust on my half. We didn't dare give any of it to our two-year-old.

The next time that Joe Stocking hove in view, I asked him how on earth he made bread and how he kneaded it. With that encouragement, he whipped up a batch in no time. I watched his every move and made notes which annoyed him a bit, for like every good cook he used a pinch of this or that and never followed a recipe. However I was soon successful in turning out various breads – oatmeal and whole wheat and rolls, and I even learned how to make doughnuts.

In late September we asked one of the prospectors who was going down by canoe to Swain Post if he would take our radio battery and have it recharged so that it would do us for the winter months. During the freeze-up in the fall, before the ice was strong enough to support travel by snowshoe or dog-team, and during the break-up in the spring while waiting for the ice to clear for travel by canoe and kicker, there would be a period of about a month or six weeks when we would be completely isolated. Swain Post was operated by a trader, George Swain who, I was told, had been a doctor. It was the take-off point to the outside world. Planes landed there with supplies every few weeks. We asked the prospector to have Swain send the battery back with the first person who was returning to our vicinity.

Finally one cold night, an Indian arrived with our battery, but all the fluid had leaked out en route, so that it was not much use. John decided that he had better



make the trip immediately to Swain Post to get another battery, the mail, and any other supplies that we might need during the freeze-up.

He reasoned that if he left about four o'clock in the morning he would be able to make the return trip before dark. I packed a substantial lunch for him and the prospector who was going with him and on a bitterly cold, dark October morning they set out across the bay which was already rimmed with ice.

That afternoon the wind rose and heavy clouds blew wildly across the sky. Bob played outside for a while and then I took him for a walk to investigate a queer banging noise. It was the door of an old tent frame, blowing and creaking back and forth in the wind. We hurried back to the cook-house, past all the deserted mine buildings with their staring empty windows.

Inside, we had plenty of four-foot logs piled up beside the oil-drum stove. I got Bob into his pyjamas and in my most cheerful voice said that we would have a lovely afternoon reading stories and painting pictures. Then I took down the gas lamp to pump it and found that it had no gas in it. Nor was there any oil in our one coal-oil lamp. I looked for the keys to the storehouse where the gas and oil were kept, and unable to find them, realized that John had probably taken them with him. Once more we got into our outdoor clothes and dashed through the howling gale to the storehouse. It was locked.

By this time it was dusk, that dim, depressing time when the day is over and one depends on light and laughter, sound and music, a fire in a fireplace, food, drink and companionship. Well, I had companionship in my young son and I explained to him, as I took off his coat again, that we would not light the lamp, but that we would curl up in the chair by the fire, have tea, and tell stories. I fixed a tray of food and we settled down to put in the time by singing all the nursery songs we knew and telling stories. I had a flashlight by my side so that I could see to put him into bed when the time came.

We were in the middle of Humpty Dumpty when we heard a strange, thudding, thumping noise. 'What was that?' Bob interrupted the rhyme and turned to me. I saw his big eyes gleaming in the firelight. 'I don't know, darling, probably just the wind.' With that, someone or something bumped into the corner of the house; then the thumping sounds made their way steadily along the building towards the front door. I knew it was not locked and I wondered in anguish whether the latch would hold against the howling gale. I told Bob to stay in the chair and made my way down the great length of the old cook-house. The thumps reached the log that formed the front step and stopped. Just as I put out my hand to open the door, the latch was pushed down, the wind blew the door open and there, shining in my flashlight beam, was the long white face of the horse.

I gave a roar of surprise and relief. The unfortunate beast, terrified by the sudden sight of me, jumped straight into the air, and galloped off across the rocks into the bush.

Eileen and Bob help to keep the stoves supplied with wood.

I slammed the door shut and dashed back to my son who thought it was all a tremendous joke. We were still laughing about it when we heard a shout from the shore. John had come safely across the rough lake. We soon had the keys for the storehouse, the lamps filled and burning brightly and the new battery in the radio. We had music and light, mail, newspapers and supplies, and – a rare treat – fresh eggs and bacon for our late supper.

After Mrs Stocking left, there seemed to be only one other woman in the country besides myself. She lived with two men at some distance from the mine and we heard strange stories about them and their activities. One evening there was a call from the lake, and there she was, having come to visit us.

'Sister' everybody called her, and she was quite an attractive woman. One of the men was called 'Brother' and the other 'Windy'. Windy owned a team of ferocious huskies and he used to devote all his spare time to fishing so that the dogs would be well fed. Rumour had it that he cherished the dogs so much that they would jump on the sleigh and he would pull them all home.

Sister invited us over for tea and Windy and his dog-team were to pick us up. When the day arrived Windy took pains to see that I got on the sled as unobtrusively as possible, so that the dogs would not realize what was going on. He said that they went 'mad' whenever they saw a woman. John decided not to come and so about two in the afternoon we started out, Bob and I snuggled down in a big bear-skin rug and Windy standing on the runners at the back and steering the sleigh onto the ice. With a great flourish of his whip in the air, and a roar of 'Mush – Mush' we were off.

The dogs, yelping madly, scurried along for a few minutes. Then one dog stopped dead in his tracks. There was a tangle of harness until the lead dog sat and patiently waited while the one that had stopped originally stepped to one side to relieve himself.

Windy stared woodenly into space. Bob, rigid with excitement, shrieked in a high treble 'Look, Mummy'. Finally Windy twirled his whip in the air, shouted 'Mush' and off we raced. Three minutes later there was another halt while another dog went through the same performance. The whole journey was punctuated by these stops.

Eventually we arrived. Sister produced her fine bone-china cups and saucers and a delicious afternoon tea, and we discussed their current project which was home brew. Apparently it blew up from time to time.

At the end of the afternoon, Windy packed the back part of the sleigh full of fresh fish which he had caught through a hole in the ice, and we mushed back across the lake. It was an exhilarating adventure, skimming over the frozen wastes of the northland by dog-team, a full moon overhead and the air clear and crisp.

As the cold weather settled in, we decided to move from the large cook-house which was hard to heat, to a little office. There we had one big room; our beds were on either wide wall and the big oil-drum stove was in the middle. We had the dining-living-room section at one end and a sort of lean-to for our kitchen where we had a small stove and counter space.

For a solid week the temperature stayed around -52°F. – 84 degrees of frost! We could not let Bob go out to play for even a minute; his lungs would have frozen in that biting air. We could not even use our lean-to kitchen to get our meals; the water froze on top of the stove. We simply huddled around our big oil-drum stove in the centre of our living quarters, feeding it continually with great four-foot logs and doing our bit of cooking on the top.

One night we were awakened by stifling heat, to find that the chimney was crimson red. The 'green' logs we had used to bank the fire had started to burn, and nothing, we were told, is hotter than 'green' logs. After that, we went to bed late to keep watch. John would get up when the alarm went off about three in the morning, re-stoke the fire and see that everything was under control for the rest of the night.

The winter was so severe that half the cans in the storehouse froze solid and cracked, in spite of our keeping the stove going there. We had to throw out a lot of tinned food and we stored all we could in our own well-heated cabin, on shelves built around the room. The place was a congested mess, but I comforted myself with the thought that it was only a temporary arrangement. We were reasonably warm and well fed – more than could be said for over half the population of Canada in those difficult depression years.

In mid-November we started to think about Christmas. We needed supplies – we were completely out of eggs and other types of food – so we decided to send an order to the company's head office and include a request for a turkey and some Christmas decorations.

In the meantime John was secretly making a sleigh for Bob and I spent my evenings sewing stuffed animals and various other toys. As Christmas drew near, we anxiously watched the skies for a plane, hoping that it would land on our lake rather than at Swain Post. The week before Christmas, we often heard the drone of aircraft flying in to other camps.

The day before Christmas Eve I told myself that there was no use hoping any more – no plane was going to land with our turkey and supplies. We had, of course, a vast choice of Christmas trees. To cheer ourselves up, the three of us went out to cut the biggest and the best. We dragged it home and installed it in our living-room. I had painted bits of macaroni with red paint and made angels and stars out of tin-foil from tobacco packages. We all decorated the tree and then we took the sleigh and delivered the Christmas hampers we had packed for the men living near the mine. Each hamper contained a pair of heavy socks, tobacco from the mine stores, a big loaf of home-made bread, mince pie, a small Christmas pudding and cake, shortbread and cookies, home-made fudge, and tins of fruit and jam. In the course of our rounds we invited one lonely old man to have Christmas dinner with us. He did not seem to have a cent and was living on rabbits.

Then, on Christmas Eve, just as darkness fell about four in the afternoon, there was a call from the lake. We rushed down and there, with a team of pure-white huskies, was George Swain himself. With his beard and parka, he looked like Santa Claus, and his sleigh, appropriately, was piled to the top with boxes and bundles of every description.

He had heard that we were on our own at the mine and that we had a two-year-old son. When the plane had landed at his post, he had piled our parcels, supplies, and equipment into the sleigh and driven his dogs forty miles to deliver the shipment so that we would have it before Christmas. How could we tell him – a complete stranger – how much we appreciated the time and effort he had given to bring the shipment to us before Christmas Day? How generous he was; his kindness and consideration have never been forgotten. He would not stay overnight, but unloaded his sleigh and took off again across the frozen lake.

We lugged our boxes up to the cabin and soon realized that our order to the company had been cut down. There was no turkey, no decorations and no presents. Our order, in fact, included only the barest necessities, and consisted mostly of parts for the mine machinery. Not even the bullets we had ordered had been included, and they really were a necessity!

However, the pile of Christmas cards from all of our friends and the letters and boxes from my sister and

Christmas 1932. Eileen, Bob and the dinner guest wear Christmas cracker hats.

aunt, soon made us forget our disappointment. They had included presents for us all, and tree decorations, and Christmas crackers. They were all going through the same grim depression with barely enough money for food, but in spite of the high cost of freight they had managed to send many gifts.

When we had finished putting things in order we sat back, had cocoa, shortbread and some Christmas cake and admired the perfection of the tree. After Bob was asleep, John and I placed his sleigh under the tree. It was painted green and white, and had a high back and sides so that we could pad it with blankets to protect him from the wind. We got out all the blocks we had cut from bits of wood, the stuffed animals and dolls I had made from the tops of socks and we spread around the tree the books and toys my sister and aunt had sent. In spite of our crowded surroundings Christmas Day, we knew, would be perfect.

In the morning, after having breakfast and opening our presents, we had to concern ourselves with what we were to give our guest for dinner. John found three bullets in the storehouse, and with two of them he shot two good-sized partridge.

While he was cleaning them in the storehouse, I saw a lone figure trudging on his snowshoes across the lake, and there was our guest. He was coming for his 'dinner' at noon, although I had planned the feast for seven. However, I had the mince pies ready, and before he arrived on our doorstep, all was in order. The table looked festive with crackers and the dinner, served at 1:30 p.m., was a success. The old man was pleased with his hamper and seemed to enjoy his day. We played cribbage after lunch and he left about four in the afternoon to snowshoe back to his cabin.

That evening, several of the Swedes came in to wish us a happy Christmas, and we had coffee, cake, and good conversation. They were a decent bunch of courageous men, waiting patiently for the mine to start so that they could get jobs. Their pride would not permit them to accept any form of relief and, as their savings ran out, they would chop wood in return for flour, tea, sugar, and tobacco.

In the spring, we heard that funds might soon be available to start the mine, and we were instructed to kill one of the pigs so that there would be fresh meat for the crew.

Although I could not feel that the pigs and I were really good friends they had been our companions over the past months. They had interesting personalities, and we had gone through a lot together. Naturally John felt that he could not possibly do away with them, and so we sent the word to Joe Stocking who had butchered many pigs in his day. The word spread by bush telegraph of this event, and we heard that most of the men in the area planned to attend the affair and that they would expect a substantial lunch.

I ground up moose meat, made a gigantic shepherd's pie, and baked numerous apple and mincemeat pies, bread, rolls, cakes and cookies. All morning long canoes could be seen heading across the lake towards the mine. The last arrival was Joe, the star of the show.

In one of the shacks, an enormous cauldron of boiling water was ready. I was in the kitchen trying not to dwell on the purpose of the gathering when I was electrified to hear frightful screams of anguish. Scooping up Bob I raced down to the lake and along the shore until we were well out of hearing. Fortunately the stove (with dinner in the oven) went out, so that nothing was burnt black.

Eventually I came back and, hearing no more noise, continued with my preparations for lunch. When the men came in, I asked John what had happened. He explained that one pig had been penned up and the other, the one scheduled for slaughter, had been lured away with grain so that he could be quietly eating when he was killed. His companion, seeing food beyond his reach, had had a tantrum, so neither pig had been in mortal pain when we heard the screaming.

Joe said 'Missis, I hope you will invite me to a good roast pork dinner.'

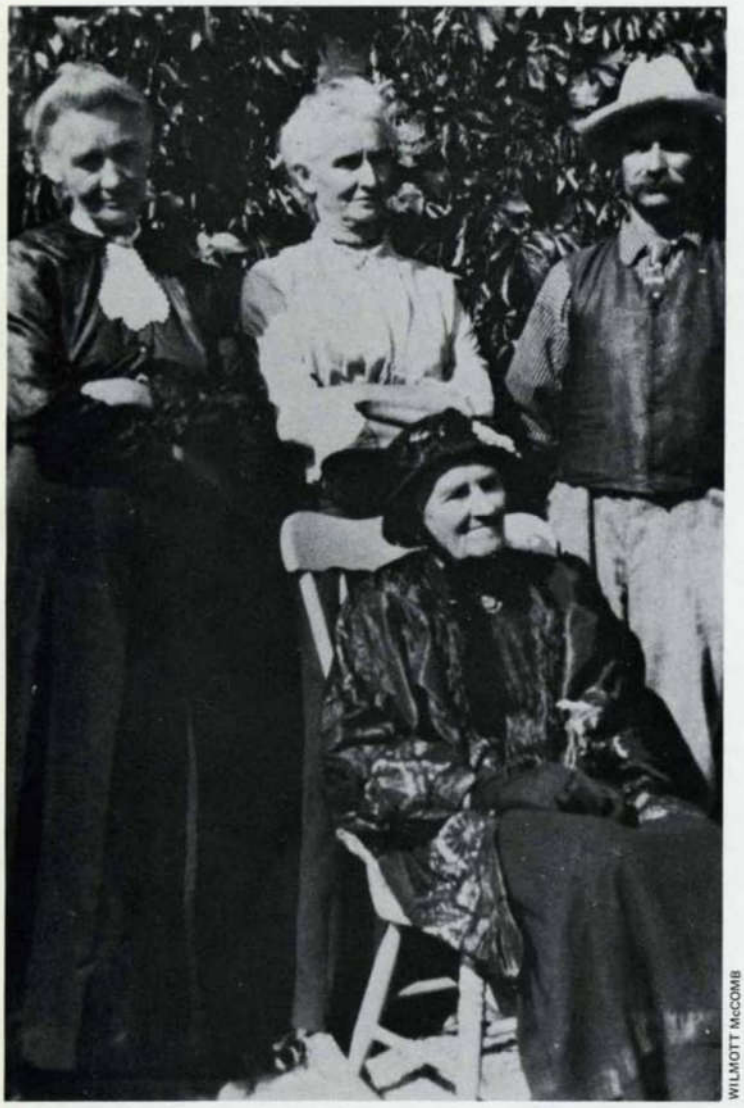
It was not an appropriate moment for such a suggestion. Shattered by the whole business I said firmly, 'I'm sorry but there will be no roast pork served while I am here.'

Soon after this the mine started up again. There was no room for Bob or me at the property, for the buildings were used once again as cook-house, office, and bunk-houses for the men. Bob and I returned to Regina. The mine, named Argosy Gold Mines Ltd when it was re-financed in 1935 and later taken over by Jason Gold Mines, continued in operation until 30 April 1952. By that time it had produced 227,000 tons of ore valued at three and a quarter million dollars. ◆

THE BELANEYS OF BRANDON HILLS

Grey Owl's Canadian Cousins

By Donald B. Smith



WILMOTT McCOMB

Maggie, Jessie, and George France with their mother, Mrs Charles Belaney Sr about 1910.

BETWEEN 1896 AND 1914 more than three million immigrants came to settle in Canada. Most crossed the Atlantic to improve their standard of living; others were seeking freedom from religious persecution in their native lands. Perhaps the most interesting were those who came to escape their own past, and to begin again in the New World. A young English immigrant named Archibald Stansfeld Belaney, later to be known as Grey Owl, belonged to this category.

From the time of his arrival in Canada in 1906 Archie Belaney worked towards reconstructing his identity. Once his accent had disappeared he claimed that he was the son of a Scottish-American guide and an Apache woman, and that he had been born on the banks of the Rio Grande. Until his death in 1938 he would advance the same story, which both his white and Indian companions accepted. They called him Grey Owl, and in northern Canada he went by that name.

In the early 1930s the world discovered Grey Owl. He became Canada's best known Indian through his four books on northern Canada, his films with the beaver, and his lectures on conservation in Britain and across North America. The public – until one week after his death in April 1938 – completely accepted his story of his origins. It was only in late April 1938 that his two elderly aunts, Ada and Carrie Belaney, came forward and revealed his true identity. The Misses Belaney of Hastings, England, calmly told the press that they had raised the boy who was the son of their wayward brother, George, and his wife, Kitty.

Grey Owl remains a subject of curiosity a generation after his death. His contributions as a conservationist and as a defender of Canada's native peoples are now receiving proper recognition. A CBC television documentary and a new biography *Wilderness Man* written by his friend and publisher, Lovat Dickson, have recently rekindled interest in his life. What follows is a footnote for those intrigued by the story of Grey Owl. By the

By the mid-1930s, while the world still believed that he was an Indian, Belaney had close relatives in Western Canada who had surmised that he was their cousin. To explain the tie binding Grey Owl and the Belaneys of Brandon Hills, Manitoba, one must return to Berwickshire, Scotland, the Belaney's ancestral home.

The founder of the family, John Belaney (1771-1851) is identified in the parish registry of Hume, Berwickshire, in 1819 as a farm labourer. Notwithstanding his modest means, all six of his sons would advance socially in the world. Strong parental encourage-

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ment, coupled with the excellent rural education then offered in Scotland, best accounts for their success. The eldest boy, Robert, attended Cambridge University and became an Anglican clergyman. The second son, John, established and operated his own business in Ayton, a small Berwickshire village. In the early 1840s the third son, James Cockburn, practised as a surgeon at North Sunderland, near Newcastle in neighbouring Northumberland. The youngest boy, David, bought his own farm at Lucan just outside of Dublin. Of particular interest to this article, however, are the careers of the fourth son, Charles, and the fifth, Archibald. Charles would later found the Canadian branch of the family, and Archibald (Grey Owl's grandfather) founded the English branch.

Charles Belaney farmed in Berwickshire. The Scottish census of 1851 reveals that he began quite well, farming over 400 acres at Hillend near Ayton, and employing twelve labourers. By the census of 1861, he appears to have scaled down his operation slightly, employing just six labourers and two 'boys'. Charles must have started breeding horses at this time for one 'horse-breaker' is listed as being in his employ.

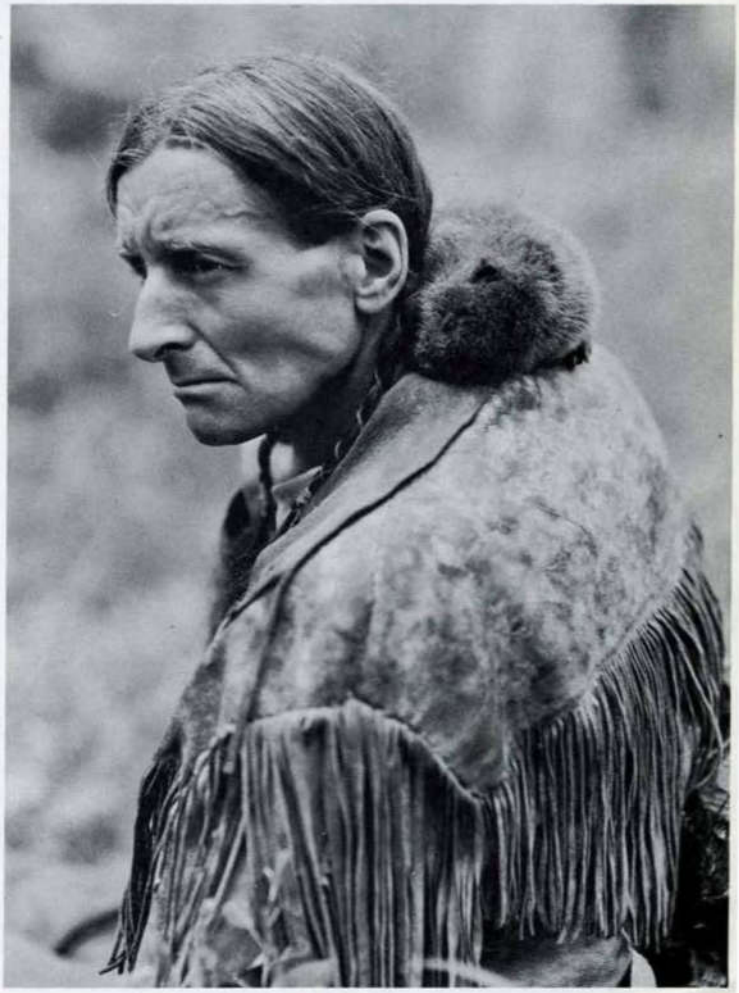
By 1867 Charles's fortunes had turned. According to his only surviving granddaughter, Doreen Stanford, still living today in Britain, the family lost its money as a result of unexpected financial reverses with the horse-breeding. At the age of fifty with six children to support, Charles was obliged to begin afresh. He left Scotland for Ireland where rents were lower and, from 1869 to 1880, leased a hundred acres near Castle Pollard, fifty miles northwest of Dublin.

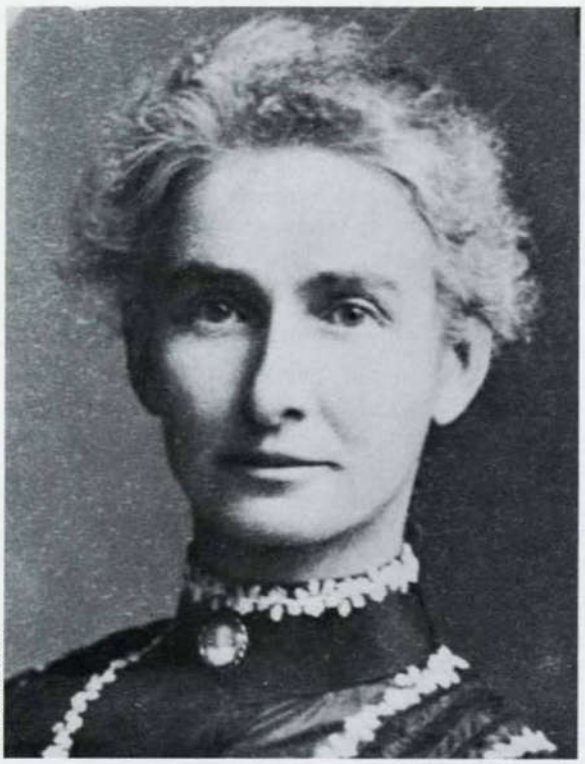
In Ireland Charles's family increased by another three, and it again became apparent that they simply could not make ends meet. The expense of sending his eldest daughter, Jessie, to a ladies' finishing school in Scotland, was an additional financial burden. It was at this point, in the late 1870s that the Belaneys considered coming to Canada. In the new western province of Manitoba, one could obtain a homestead of 160 acres for just $10. The soil was good, capable of producing hard wheat which made excellent flour. Between 1876 and 1881 forty thousand settlers poured into the province. Like hundreds of other British families Charles and his eldest son, Charles Jr, decided to try Manitoba. By family tradition, Charles and his son went first to Rapid City in 1879 where they remained only a short time. In May 1881, Charles obtained his homestead at the foot of the Brandon Hills in what would soon be known as the rural municipality of Oakland. Although he could have purchased good open land on the prairie only five to six miles to the west, he settled at the hills, unable to resist the stony, bush-covered site which reminded him of his native Berwickshire.

When Charles and his son left for Canada there was so little money that the rest of the family remained behind. Maggie, the second eldest daughter, stayed with relatives in Scotland and raised the younger children. The eldest girl, Jessie, who had been well educated, went out to New Zealand as a governess. Only when enough money had been saved did Jessie, Maggie, and their sister, Eliza, and their brother, George France, come to Canada. In Manitoba Eliza married John Scott, a baker, and settled at Elkhorn, a town about seventy miles to the west of her parents' farm at the Brandon Hills. In 1896, Jessie married a neighbouring farmer, William McComb, who lived about fourteen miles to the northwest of the Belaney farm. George France and Maggie never married and took over the operation of their parents' farm. Jessie Belaney McComb's stepson, Wilmott McComb, and Eliza Belaney Scott's daughter, Catherine, and her daughter-in-law, Ivy Scott, have kindly furnished many of the details presented here on the Belaneys at Brandon Hills.

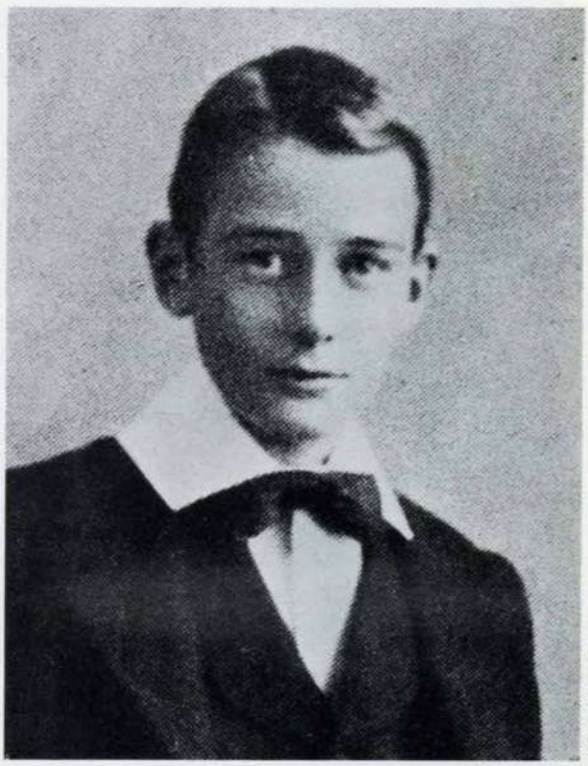
While Charles planted the Belaney name in Canada, his brother, Archibald, established it in England. Since his arrival in London around 1840 Archibald had done well as a ship's broker. In 1856 he had married Julia

Grey Owl, the son of George Furmage Belaney, with one of his beaver friends.





WILMOTT McCOMB



LOVAT DICKSON

The close resemblance of Jessie Belaney McComb to her cousin Archibald Stansfeld Belaney is evident in these two photographs taken about 1900.

Jackson, related to the well-born English family, the Stansfelds. The wedding at St Marylebone, the church of what was then the richest parish in England, was attended by a former Lord Mayor of London, Chapman Marshall, who acted as one of the two official witnesses.

Archibald died in London in 1865 at the age of 43 leaving behind three children: the future Grey Owl's father, George Furmage Belaney, then a boy of eight, and two infant daughters, Carrie and Ada. Raised by their mother and separated by several hundred miles from their Scottish and Irish first cousins, George, Carrie, and Ada would grow up knowing little about them. George's appearance at Brandon Hills just before the First World War proves, however, that the tie was never completely broken, at least with Charles's children in Manitoba. At the Belaney farm Wilmott McComb, now in his early 80s, distinctly remembers that when he was 'about 18 or 19' he met George Belaney in the fall during harvest time.

As Mr McComb met George only once, his recollection is somewhat vague. He does remember asking the visitor about England. To the query George Belaney 'in a real English accent' replied: 'I really don't know much about it. I've been abroad for several years.' Later the Englishman said that he had a son named Archibald in northern Canada, but that he had not heard from him for some time.

When George Belaney arrived at Brandon Hills he had already passed fifty. He lacked the drive and energy of Charles, his late uncle, who had worked constantly on the Brandon homestead to secure his family's welfare until his death in 1890. As Lovat Dickson has shown in his recent study, *Wilderness Man*, George, raised by his indulgent mother, had grown up the perfect ne'er-do-well. In his early thirties he had bankrupted the London tea business purchased for him by his mother. A decade later he ran through considerable sums on the orange grove she gave him in Florida. Nor were his morals any better than his ability to spend money. By the late 1890s George had abandoned two wives and four children. He had left his eldest son, Archibald Stansfeld Belaney, born in 1888, to be brought up by his two unmarried sisters, Carrie and Ada, who lived in Hastings.

One suspects that when George Furmage arrived in the Brandon Hills his first cousins, Maggie and George France Belaney, knew little of him. Their mother, Mrs Charles Belaney, still lived and undoubtedly she would remember her husband's younger brother, Archibald, who had established himself in London. Maggie and George France welcomed their first cousin warmly. They called over their sister, Jessie McComb, who brought her family with her.

At the farm one can imagine the conversation that followed – the family's history must have been rapidly reviewed. Mention must have been made of their uncle, the Reverend Robert Belaney, whose photograph was on the mantelpiece in the living-room. Maggie might have brought forward the letters she had received from their

first cousins in Lucan, Ireland, and from their first cousin, Margaret Belaney Falconer (the merchant John Belaney's daughter) in Edinburgh.

George Furmage Belaney's dramatic departure from Brandon several days later made a lasting impression on his Manitoba relatives. Wilmott McComb remembers Maggie's account of the incident. Evidently George had asked for the rig to go into Brandon one night and had returned in a drunken stupor. Upon his return, he fell off the wagon and his cousins had to drag him back into the house. The next morning after he had sobered up they sent him packing and never laid eyes on him again.

Maggie and George never forgot their unwelcome relative and remembered that his son lived in northern Ontario. When Grey Owl, in fact, began to achieve national prominence in the early 1930s the Belaneys soon realized that he was their relative. Ivy Scott, Eliza Belaney Scott's daughter-in-law, recalls how she discovered around 1934 or 1935 that Grey Owl was the second cousin of her husband, Peter Scott.

In the mid-1930s the Scotts lived in Brandon. One day Mrs Scott saw a film of Grey Owl and the beavers advertised in the local newspaper and decided to take her son. Her husband could not accompany them to the Saturday matinee but he commented that Grey Owl was his 'cousin'. This puzzled Mrs Scott but when she saw the film she realized that Grey Owl did look 'like a Belaney'. Then Aunt Maggie confirmed the relationship. 'Oh yes' she said. 'He is a cousin.'

Fifteen years later in 1951 Maggie Belaney, who was then living with the Scotts at Nanaimo on Vancouver Island, told Mrs Scott the full story of Grey Owl's father's visit. One day in August 1951 Mrs Scott came across an article in *Maclean's* magazine entitled *Grey Owl: The Magnificent Fraud* written by the journalist Trent Frayne. The story revealed how Grey Owl, who in his lifetime had claimed to be the son of a Scottish-American guide named McNeil and an Apache woman, in reality was Archibald Belaney of Hastings, England. In his article Frayne summarized all the details of Grey Owl's English background that had come to light after his death in April 1938. Knowing of the family connection Mrs Scott read the piece to Aunt Maggie who soundly enjoyed it.

After hearing the article, Aunt Maggie 'opened up' and recalled how Grey Owl's father had once paid them a visit. He had appeared on their doorstep, she said, at harvest time. As he knew little of the farm routine Maggie and George France asked him to take the grain to the elevator at Rounthwaite. Eagerly George Furmage

George France Belaney on the right in the family rig, circa 1910.

MAGGIE BELANEY COLLECTION

MAGGIE BELANEY COLLECTION

Several months after celebrating her 92nd birthday Maggie Belaney told the full story of the visit of Grey Owl's father.

consented, and when it was ready took the shipment to the railway. At the elevator he duly received the payment made out to his cousin 'George F. Belaney'. When he touched the cheque, however, his connection with his Brandon Hills cousins ended. As his name was also 'George F. Belaney' he cashed it and absconded with the money. Because of embarrassment Maggie had never told the McCombs the real reason for his hasty departure.

The professional historian, cautious by trade, always demands documentary evidence to support oral testimony. In this case two items can be brought forward to support the claim that the Belaneys of Brandon Hills knew George Furmage Belaney. The proof that George knew of his Canadian cousins can be found in the rough notes of Betty Somervell who helped Lovat Dickson research his first biography of Grey Owl, *Half Breed.* In 1938, shortly after Grey Owl's death and his 'exposure' Mrs Somervell interviewed Grey Owl's mother, Kitty – George Belaney's third wife. Kitty told her that the last time George had left her he had said that he was going to visit cousins in Canada. In Mrs Somervell's notes appears the entry, 'When G[eorge] left her he *went to his cousins in Canada* uncertain when or where.'

Another reference exists – Maggie Belaney's anniversary book, given to her by a Scottish friend in 1881. Maggie regularly asked her friends and relations to write their names in her book opposite their birth dates. After leafing through dozens of names one arrives at June 14th where the eye catches the elegant signature of Grey Owl's father, 'George F. Belaney'. He was born on 14 June 1857. As he was in Florida in the mid-1880s when Maggie was still in Scotland, and since Maggie was in Canada in the 1890s when he apparently lived in England, he must have signed her book in Canada.

A final item can be brought forward which helps to establish that the Belaneys in both Canada and Scotland knew their first cousin and the true identity of his son. Just after the First War, one of Grey Owl's second cousins, Archibald Falconer, the grandson of the merchant John Belaney, moved from Edinburgh to Duval, Saskatchewan. One suspects that he was the one who, having learned from the Belaneys of Brandon Hills about Grey Owl, wrote back to his two sisters about him. Subsequently the Misses Falconer of Edinburgh apparently contacted their 'Indian' cousin, for Grey Owl notes in a letter written probably in the fall of 1932 to his wife, Anahareo: 'two old maiden ladies living in some part of Scotland have written me thru Country Life [the firm which published his first book], and claim to be first cousins or some kind of cousins of my fathers side of the family. It seems genuine, although they do not know my uncle (McNeil) but seem to have heard of him. They are called "Belaneys of Mac –" something or other, and are very old, and are very proud of me.'

Why, one wonders, did the Belaneys of Brandon Hills not come forward and identify their famous cousin? One suspects that Maggie and George France (who died in 1933) held back for the simple reason of having met his father. Having once encountered the father they had no desire to become personally acquainted with the son. Indeed if one of the McCombs, Mr Wilmott McComb's niece, Anne Brownlow, had not written in 1974 to Grey Owl's daughter, Dawn, the story of his Canadian cousins would still be untold. Dawn forwarded Mrs Brownlow's letter to me and I then set to work unravelling the mystery.

The story of Grey Owl and his Canadian cousins is admittedly a footnote to the account of his life. He never met them, desiring as he did to sever as completely as possible all of his family ties. If he had called on them it is doubtful that he would have had much in common with them. His Canada – to quote from one of his letters written in 1935 – was not the 'flat, lifeless and monotonous' prairies, but the North with 'the Pines, Deep Water, White Water, Gulleys, Ravines, tumbled purple hills, deep snow and tempest!'

Archie Belaney came to Canada to free himself from his past. He found his upbringing in Hastings and his memory of his father so oppressive that he shed his past and constructed a totally new identity as an Indian. However, even Grey Owl failed to escape completely. While he might have forgotten them, his cousins in Manitoba knew of him. One wonders how many other immigrants who wished to start afresh in the New World ever entirely succeeded in freeing themselves from the bonds of the past. ◆

Mother and child, taken on a plane flying into Cape Dorset from Frobisher Bay.

CAPE DORSET FACES

Sketches by Susan Ross

In September of 1973 Munamee (right) and his wife took artist Susan Ross of Thunder Bay out to visit an Eskimo camp about 50 miles from Cape Dorset for three or four days. Most of one day was spent 'drifting in his canoe and sailing with a piece of plastic when the motor collapsed'.

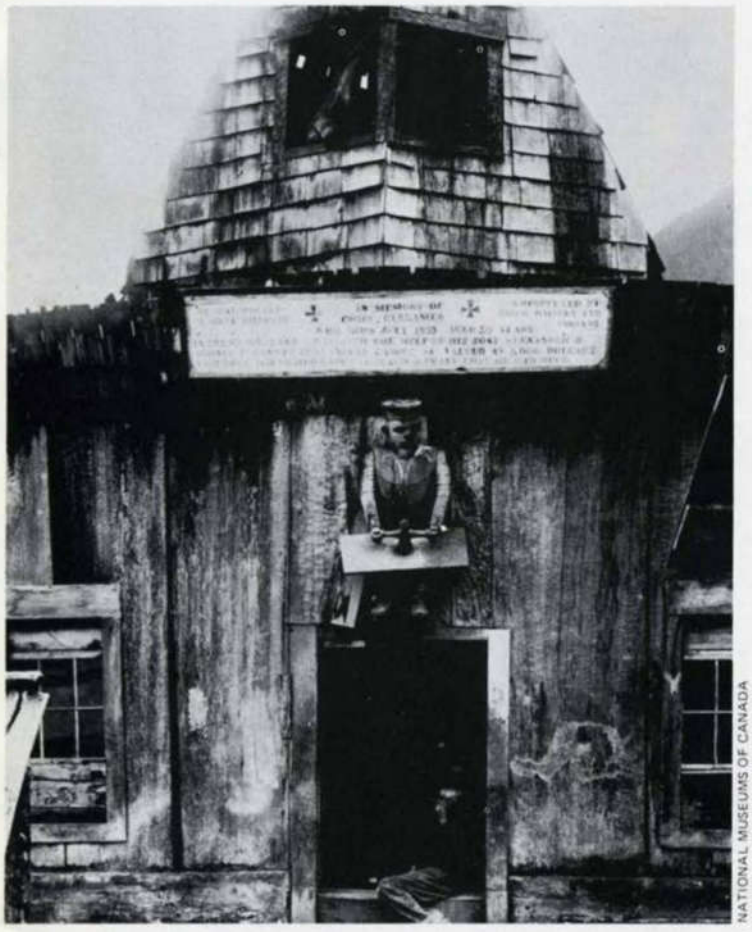
When Susan Ross asked these boys for their names they wrote them carefully in syllabics.

MORTUARY ART
From the Northwest Coast

By Margaret B. Blackman

Professor Blackman is with the Anthropology Department, University of Delaware

In the late 19th century memorials to the dead were occasionally erected on housefronts. This memorial honouring Bella Coola Chief Clelamen who died July 1893 states that 'in Dec. 92 he gave away with the help of his sons Alexander and Johnny property in blankets canoes &C valued at 4000 dollars this being his eighth large potlatch and feast that he had held.'



NATIONAL MUSEUMS OF CANADA

THE LATTER PART of the last century is often viewed by social scientists and historians as a period of cultural decline for the Indians of the Pacific Northwest. By the turn of the present century the ascendancy of the Haida, Tsimshian, Kwakiutl, and other Northwest Coast groups was at an end. Upon the ruins of the cedar-plank community houses were erected modern cottages, and the once-proud, monumental totem poles listed, rotted, and one by one were cut down. The people had suffered in the 19th century from epidemic disease – the most recent and devastating, a smallpox epidemic in 1862. The federal and provincial governments, working in concert, had staked out the vast forest and rocky shores into isolated patches of reservation lands. The Indian Act of 1876 marked the beginning of the end of traditional forms of government; the potlatch through which the internal ranking of these societies found formal expression was forbidden by an act of the Canadian Government in 1884, and the missionaries had come to dwell permanently among the people determined to inculcate the arts of civilization, Christianity, and Victorian morals.

Though the turn of the present century marked the close of a traditional way of life, this period of time can also be viewed in a positive light, as an era of experimentation and innovation when the native cultures sought to reaffirm their identity in the face of drastic changes. Nowhere is this experimentation and combination of old and new more apparent than in the mortuary art and practices of the turn-of-the-century Northwest Coast peoples.

In my research on the Northwest Coast as an anthropologist, my interest in turn-of-the-century Northwest Coast culture was piqued by tombstones I saw in the native cemeteries. Along the northern coast many of the early 20th-century stones had carved on their faces the

'crest' figure of the deceased individual. These zoömorphic figures, once carved on mortuary totem poles, bespoke the traditional kinship affiliations of the native people. Rising above the buttercups and huckleberry bushes which threatened to overtake the cemeteries, were the figures of grizzly bears, killer whales, and eagles etched into stone. In coastal cemeteries farther south, stones advertised the greatness of former chiefs; the measure of a man's life was told in the potlatch wealth he distributed, its sum forever inscribed on the face of a tombstone. I learned of other instances in which a man's rank could not be expressed in a single monument, and two stones, side by side, were required to convey to all observers the chief's position in society. Some tombstones of important native individuals never made it to the cemetery. George Rudge, a stonemason from Prince Rupert, once carved a large monument for a Haida chief who had drowned in the treacherous waters off Rose Spit on the Queen Charlottes. Inlaid with gold leaf, the massive monument was taken by Haida canoe to the Queen Charlotte Islands, where, off Rose Spit, the big canoe was rolled over, and the chief's monument sent down through the watery depths to him.

Tombstones and tombstone art on the Northwest Coast are products of the culture of the missionaries. These bringers of European civilization sought to change many aspects of the native cultures they contacted, foremost among these, the traditional treatment of the dead.

Despite numerous differences in traditional mortuary practices along the Northwest Coast, under the aegis of the mission, all the Northwest Coast peoples eventually came to accept earth burial accompanied by Christian ritual and the marking of the grave with a tombstone. Yet, at the same time, many native mortuary practices continued to exist side by side with the new Christian ones. The changes introduced by the missionaries and the resultant synthesis of the new and the traditional are documented for the Haida in church archives and in the remembrances of elderly Haida people with whom I have worked since 1970.

Traditionally some of the most important ceremonies in Haida culture centred about the commemoration of the dead. At death, a high-ranking chief received the most elaborate recognition. Mourned for four days by members of his lineage, he lay in state in the place of honour in the rear of his cedar-plank house. His face had been carefully painted by females of his father's lineage, and his coffin was surrounded by his most important ceremonial property – his blankets, copper shields, masks, and painted and carved boxes. At the end of the mourning period, the chief's remains were removed from

Chief Skowal, an Alaskan Haida, had been lying in state for two years when Ensign Albert Niblack took this photograph of his coffin and funerary display in the summer of 1885.

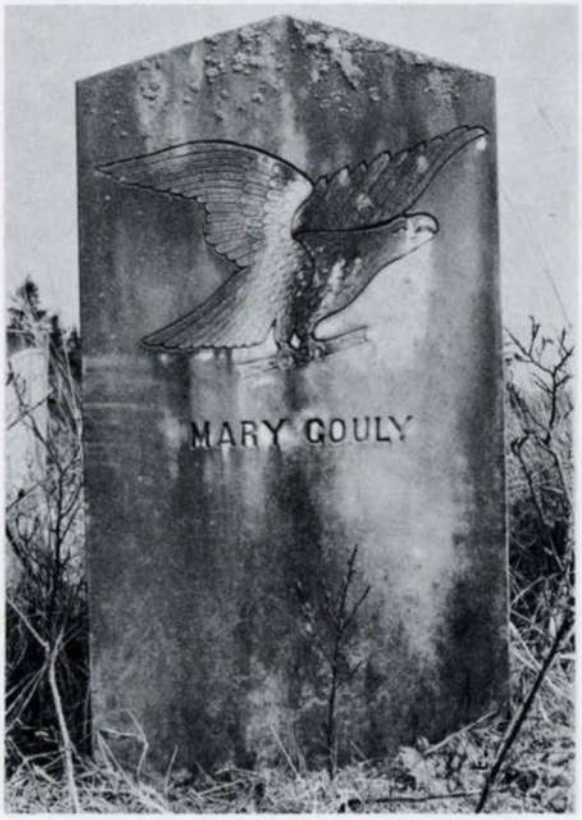
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

the house to a lineage gravehouse behind the row of dwellings in the village. There his remains lay as his heir and lineage mates garnered the requisite wealth for his mortuary potlatch. This potlatch marked the final memorialization of the dead. At the ceremony, food was burned in the central fire of the cedar lodge and sent through the flames to the deceased. Members of his father's lineage secured the cedar log from which the grave column was carved. This 'totem pole' had carved upon it a crest figure of the deceased, and often, a niche was cut in the back for placement of the deceased's remains. In other instances, the carved column was merely a memorial to the dead and his coffin remained in the lineage grave house where it had been placed at his death.

The first missionary to the Haida, William H. Collison, was appalled at the traditional mortuary practices, and in 1876 he wrote to his superior in England:

> These receptacles of the dead are in many places from 40 to 50 and 60 feet in height and proportionately thick. In many of these there are whole families encased, and as many of them are old and decayed, they often fall to pieces, scattering the remains on the ground. I consider this practice injurious to the health of the people and hope to induce them hereafter to inter their dead in ground set apart for the purpose. Indeed so numerous are those relics and remains of the dead all around that I have been compelled to select the site for my dwelling house some 250 yards from the village as the atmosphere is tainted with the smell.

The eagle crest, work of a non-Indian stone mason.



MARGARET B. BLACKMAN

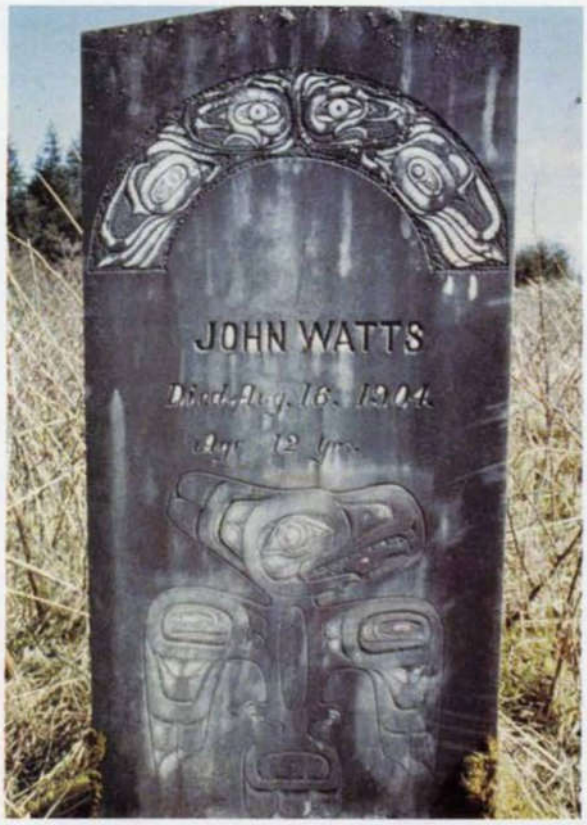
Setting about to rectify what he regarded as heathen practices, the Reverend W. H. Collison staked out a small cemetery at the northern end of the village, in that same year persuading the family of a high-ranking chief to bury their deceased head, instead of interring him in a grave column. Others continued to erect mortuary poles, but by the 1880s the second missionary to the Northern Haida, the Reverend Charles R. Harrison, had not only persuaded his congregation to order tombstones in place of erecting totem poles, but he also boasted of conducting Anglican funerals in the native community. Despite missionary efforts to Anglicanize the Northern Haida, the natives continued to give potlatches for the dead. The Reverend C. R. Harrison reported to the Church Missionary Society the potlatch which followed the burial of two Haida chiefs in the winter of 1883:

> Presently they put in an appearance headed by Edenshaw, an old chief who had on his many coloured blanket; after him came men carrying blankets to the number of 300: then came the women carrying all manner, shapes, and colours of prints: this they carried by placing the arm back over the shoulder and holding the print so as to form as good an appearance as possible. I suppose there would be about 500 yards. Then when all arrived, old Edenshaw delivered the funeral oration and set forth the deceased man's many and good virtues . . .
> When he had finished shouting, he gave the blankets away to all the Bear and Fin Backed Whale people who were present, because the deceased man was an Eagle. Then his wife tore the prints into pieces a yard or two each and gave them to the women of the aforesaid men . . . The whole performance was repeated the day after when they buried the second chief.

Although by the turn of the century native funerals were model Christian rituals, and a tombstone marked a burial in the Anglican cemetery to the north of the village, the traditional potlatch ritual at death had been successfully transferred from the erection of a carved cedar totem pole to the raising of a marble headstone in the cemetery. Anglican prayer and hymn now accompanied the distribution of gifts and food to potlatch guests, and the church itself became a recipient of potlatch wealth, but the structure of the traditional potlatch ceremony persisted in the face of acculturation and the anti-potlatch law.

The tombstones marking native graves in the Christian cemeteries were made by white stonemasons in the burgeoning communities of Victoria, Port Essington, and Prince Rupert. Almost all of the zoömorphic crest figures which appear on tombstones were rendered by these white men, whose fidelity in reproducing the native art was little better than the missionary rendering the native names engraved on the headstones. Orders for tombstones with crest figures were often accompanied by a native-drawn sketch of the figure to be carved on the stone. The drawings were done in traditional style by native artists, but the stonecutters, ignorant of the principles of native art, produced works in stone that often bore little resemblance to the original drawings.

The rare tombstone bearing a figure carved by a native artist is unmistakable. Three such tombstones



Charles Edenshaw, the famous Haida artist, carved the thunderbird (right) and the figure of the killer whale, a crest of the deceased, on these monuments with his unmistakable hand.

MARGARET B. BLACKMAN

have been documented for the Northern and Alaskan Haida and are the work of Charles Edenshaw, the master Haida artist known for his products in wood, silver, gold, and argillite. During his long career, Edenshaw also carved three known tombstones. The stones themselves were cut and the names engraved by white stonecutters, but once received in the Indian village, the stones were decorated with crest figures by Edenshaw. Undoubtedly, tucked away here and there in other native cemeteries along the coast are more unheralded products in stone of native carvers, attesting to the skill of artists whose contemporary culture was long removed from its aboriginal stone technology.

If the Northern and Alaskan Haida are typical, the mortuary art in the form of crest figures and the advertisements of potlatch accomplishments and rank on tombstones disappeared by the 1930s to be replaced by more conventional tombstones. In part this may have been a reflection of the economic decline of the late 1920s which affected the coastal fishing industry, the economy of native villages, and ultimately, the potlatch. Recently, however, crest figures have again begun to appear on tombstones, perhaps in response to the renaissance in native Northwest Coast tradition and the pride in native heritage. The current concern with maintaining a hold on the past was expressed by a Haida speaker at a mortuary potlatch given in 1970: 'Tonight we are reliving the old ways.' ◆

THE ROAR OF THE TWENTIES

By James H. Gray. Macmillan of Canada, Toronto, 1975. 358 pages. $12.95.

Reviewed by Wilfred Eggleston

The 'rip-roaring' twenties began, I suppose, on the first day of 1920 and ended on the last day of 1929. Any decade taken out of context may be an artificial segment of a 'seamless robe', but it is a convenient chunk of time for nostalgic reappraisal. The twenties on the Canadian prairies began with a mixture of relief for the end of a fearful bloodbath, and a growing apprehension about the colossal task of reconstruction. The decade ended with the collapse of a feverish and partly imaginary wave of prosperity. Certainly it was an eventful and consequential decade. There were revolutionary factors at work, partly underground, both technical and social. The automobile, the radio, aircraft, and power farming subtly changed the homesteaders' frontier into a 'brave new world' in which some of the costs seemed to exceed the gains. The war had to be paid for in the main as it went along, but it left a bitter legacy in unpaid accounts for the survivors in the 1920s, with racial hatreds and suspicions looming large amongst them. There was a grim trail of labour unrest, political turmoil, and social schisms, expressed in such phenomena as the Winnipeg general strike, the One Big Union, the rise of splinter groups like the United Farmers of Alberta, ugly bigotry as in the Ku Klux Klan.

James H. Gray (known to friends everywhere as 'Jimmy') is a veteran journalist who saw all this and the later decades at first hand, wrote about it for newspapers and magazines, and eventually undertook to become annalist and social historian, singling out some 'human interest' themes for special treatment, as in his books on booze and prostitutes. He embarked on this study – this vivid verbal cartoon, it would be more accurate to say – with the advantages of a sharp journalistic eye, an excellent memory and a way with words not often displayed by the more sober historians. He explains that he has soft-pedalled the party politics of the decade, since they have been dissected and related at length elsewhere; and since they would tend to monopolize the space available. The 'rip-roaring' decade is seen in an episodic fashion; the headlines of the era are recalled and revived. He stirs up our latent memories, and supplies many clues to what may have been, at the time, baffling puzzles.

The Roar of the Twenties holds special attractions for this reviewer. When the decade began I was a schoolboy at Outlook, Saskatchewan; when it ended I was a *Toronto Star* reporter in the Ottawa Press Gallery, assigned from time to time to tour western Canada for *Star* specials.

The origins of the immigrants, their religion and politics as well as their social habits, the wages of miners, the price of wheat and cattle, all these played a leading role in the events of the 1920s, and Gray shows how these factors blossomed into headline news. The rise of the OBU makes good sense in its *milieu;* and the agitation for a compulsory Wheat Pool now seems inescapable. For the grain grower, whose main cash crop was always wheat, the price of that grain was a constant preoccupation. The price always fluctuated and it affected the welfare of every grain grower on the prairies. If wheat went up a few cents it seemed to promise prosperity overnight; a falling market made spirits sink in a hundred thousand homes. Among the many key facts neatly embedded in 'Jimmy' Gray's lively pages is a decline in the price of wheat from $2.31 a bushel for the 1919-20 crop to an average of 76 cents a bushel four years later. (And in 1932 it would fall to 32 cents!) Aaron Sapiro, the evangelist for the Wheat Pool, who came up from California and whipped up a prairie fire which was never put out until the marketing of grain was stabilized, had a ready-made audience from Winnipeg to the Rockies.

Some of this book is solid history; much of it is lively, amusing journalism. There are very few dull paragraphs. The account of the Ku Klux Klan exposes some brand-new material, in part because the papers of J. G. Gardiner have been drawn upon, in part as a result of university research. The mansions of the wealthy in Winnipeg, Calgary, and Edmonton, the spate of bank robberies along the U.S. border, the panic and terror caused by 'the Gorilla Man' (Earle Nelson, the Strangler), the ironic and sickening episode of the Winnipeg war memorial, the swindlers, the Alberta oil boom, the passion for gambling in the stock and commodity markets, the rum runners, the Chautauqua

The J. H. Ashdown house, from 'The Roar of the Twenties'.

MANITOBA ARCHIVES

tents, the passion for baseball – these are just a few of the glimpses of a decade long gone in a land no longer naive and unsophisticated.

The selection of characters and themes is of course highly personal. Gray writes about the West he remembered or felt to be especially piquant or fascinating. Anyone who lived through the period will recall rogues who are not in this gallery, heroes who do not make an appearance. The index does not list Hatfield the Rainmaker, for example, nor J. S. Woodsworth the political evangelist, nor C. S. Noble who revolutionized large-scale dry farming, nor George Spence, the Father of Irrigation, nor Dr H. M. Tory who helped, among a score of other achievements, to defeat the scourge of wheat rust, that threatened the basic farm industry of western Canada, nor Dr C. J. Mackenzie who helped to lick concrete deterioration, nor Cora Hind of crop-survey fame. The roar of the twenties tended to drown out the gentler arts. The twenties in western Canada also saw the rise of Robert J. C. Stead, Martha Ostenso, Laura Goodman Salverson, and F. P. Grove. But the author is not attempting a cultural history. He is supplying some of the breezy, folksy, disreputable elements of history that the academics tend to disdain.

Here and there are insights into basic matters, such as his note on the gullibility of pioneers when it came to gambling adventures. 'They were a simple, direct, and moral people, with a case-hardened, nickel-plated will to believe, and an incurable optimism . . . Nobody ever came to western Canada just to be what they had been at home . . . it was a land of opportunity for all who had developed the sense to recognize opportunities when they arose . . . Even in the 1920s, after a decade in which everything that could go wrong had gone wrong, the people of the prairies still exuded confidence in the future. Being alert to opportunities was part of that confidence. So was taking a man at his word.' Gray defends this faith in one's fellow man and the Westerners' willingness to risk mistakes. 'Mistakes they were, but it was the state of mind, the character quirk, which made the making of such mistakes inevitable, which built the West.'

Wilfred Eggleston, retired director of the School of Journalism, Carleton University, Ottawa, is author of 'The High Plains' and 'While I Still Remember'.

OTTAWA WATERWAY
Gateway to a Continent

By Robert F. Legget, O.C. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1975. 276 pp., illus. $15.00.

Reviewed by James McCook

During the 1967 Confederation centennial observations Ottawa had an outdoor show recalling events in the life of the capital. As darkness came to Nepean Point the audience could hear rising from the Ottawa River the voices of canoemen singing songs made familiar all the way to the Pacific Ocean when the fur trade was at the height of expansion. These recorded songs were a timely reminder that the river has had important tasks beyond singing lullabies to politicians and being an Ontario-Quebec boundary marker.

Dr Legget, an Ottawa engineer who was the first director of the building research division of the National Research Council, uses numerous apt quotations concerning the river where canoes carrying furs were still to be seen 75 years ago. The Ottawa route gave the traders access to the northern sea, the Pacific Ocean, and the Mississippi.

In the van of exploration were the North West Company partners who, in search of furs, hurried up the Ottawa from Montreal, as the author W.S. Wallace said, to conquer half a continent and lay the foundations of the future Dominion of Canada. These pathfinders were followed, after union of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, by men of immense energy and vision: men such as Governor George Simpson who saw the start of real settlement on the Ottawa.

After the War of 1812 the Ottawa River system was a vital link in the defence system of Canada and a matter of concern to the Duke of Wellington. The river and some of its tributaries carried timbers for the last wooden ships to be built for the Royal Navy. When the war began the Nor'Westers feared the Americans would capture furs being shipped to Montreal. A flotilla of 47 large canoes carrying furs valued at 200,000 pounds sterling moved eastwards from the head of the lakes in the care of 135 Nor'Westers, all armed. Safe delivery at Montreal was completed. The passage of this brigade must have been a rare spectacle.

Fine scenery is offered by the Ottawa all along its winding route (it begins 155 miles due north of Ottawa) but however much that may have been appreciated by travellers the quotations selected by Dr Legget show that the mosquitoes were as vividly remembered as, for instance, the Rideau and Chaudiere falls at Ottawa.

Father Joseph LeCaron, who preceded Champlain up the Ottawa on his 1615 expedition, was accustomed to hardship but said of mosquitoes that 'the little demons' were the worst martyrdom he suffered in Canada; hunger, thirst, weariness, and fever were as nothing compared to these pests.

Two hundred years later, in 1821, Nicholas Garry, deputy governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, said the mosquitoes imposed on him 'a misery in the most Frightful Shape . . . The Night is passed under the Sufferings of Bites and Stings, and if at last, worn out, Sleep should close the Eyes, the call to embark now awakens you to the renewed Attacks of a Host of bloodthirsty and insatiable Enemies . . .'

Sections of the river remain unspoiled, complete with mosquitoes, but Dr Legget is concerned about pollution and lack of protection for areas of historical interest. Under the eyes of Parliament in Ottawa the excavation waste from a new bridge in 1972 was dumped on Richmond Landing, where early settlers left the river to make their way to the land where they would hack out farms.

An extraordinary and heartening statistic came from a 1969 survey on the river between Rockland and Hawkesbury. It showed that 386 anglers had been catching fish at an average rate of 1.78 an hour. This seemed too good to be true but official records support it. So long as an angler can catch 1.78 fish an hour, a river has not been polluted beyond recall.

James McCook, retired associate editor of the Ottawa Journal, has had a long-time interest in fur-trade history.

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Drawing by Helmut Hirnschall from 'My Heart Soars'.

MY HEART SOARS

By Chief Dan George, with drawings by Helmut Hirnschall. Clarke, Irwin and Company, Toronto, 1974. 95 pages. $9.95.

Reviewed by Chester Duncan

Vice is appalled by virtue, youth finds age insupportable, and the complicated sophisticate or intellectual finds primitive simplicity disconcerting, to say the least. It does not seem quite fair in this day and age that the permissive riches of body and mind should actually bring less happiness, serenity, and wisdom than the delimitations of a deliberate attachment to what we thought was over.

Chief Dan George is both a likable and challenging figure, but we can take his challenge in stride if we relegate him to the area of the 'quaint' or eccentric, or if we require him to stay put in the realm of the entertainer. He is a good actor with a most compelling presence, and if we can keep him there in the world of popular art perhaps we can find an escape from that still small voice that rests not till it find a hearing. Similarly, if he were a good enough (slick enough?) poet or prose writer we might be able to take him, unembarrassedly, in stride. But it is his very naivety – like a child's profound innocence – that catches us up with its astonishing freshness and clarity. Because of his temperament and because he is essentially a compassionate rather than a fierce old man, some of his verses are just on the verge of that kind of vague though suggestive simplicity that covers the truth like a blanket, rather than one that has to be drawn aside for the actual, terrible, statistical facts – but this also is his merit and his glory, that he is not a sociologist but a visionary. His noble vision is worth that of many Canadian poets.

There are several things about Dan George's vision that might disturb a more 'realistic' critic of Indian life, past and present. Although he does acknowledge that things are changing and that young people of his race are going into the unknown,

> Since they face
> too many temptations
> it will not be easy
> to know what is best,

nevertheless his quiet voice is hopeful, both about the outside chance of peaceful and fruitful integration without spoliation of his culture, and for the continuing sense of the Indian inheritance despite awesome impediments. If this strikes many as whistling in the dark, it is not a silly or senile music, but tragic. The love that makes the Chief's heart soar is heart-piercing in its tragic need to forget the contemporary conditions of middle-earth.

To compare Chief Dan George to Yeats and Eliot in a literary way would be absurd; yet he too is traditional in knowing that the past is present and that being 'silly' in one's old-fashionedness is one stand one can take against the modern deluge. Thus in his world the son listens to his father, nature is a book, and his mother 'knew her place well'. Life has simple though sometimes eloquently mysterious patterns and is hierarchical. It is very difficult for those conditioned and dismayed by the consequences of the American dream to find a satisfactory western alternative in their idea of culture. The Indians, as the Chief sees them, are in that sense positively anti-American ('Nothing belongs to you/of what there is').

But does he go far enough? He says that his people are quiet – 'Ours are the silent ways' in 'the heritage of silence' – and we know that their well-known reticence often leads to a breakdown in communication; but is it correct to say 'We have always done all things in a gentle manner'? Chief Dan George knows what we whites are like in our unbearable arrogance and in our still more unbearable patronage. There is reality in the ideal, of course, but does he see his own people as a Bosch or a Breughel would see them? Does Helmut Hirnschall see them? This beautifully produced book has many wonderfully appealing drawings of those whom the writer describes, and the animals and landscapes that they love and speak to. It all looks more like Eden than a paradise lost in the disappointments and greed of progress. In any case the moment, lost or not, is honoured, and prayer, work, and praise form a cycle around the gift to be simple. Only thus, says the writer (preacher?), will the far-away song of the Creator be heard.

Musician and Composer Chester Duncan is with the Department of English, University of Manitoba.

THE FEMALE EYE/ COUP D'OEIL FEMININ

Edited by Lorraine Monk. Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, Toronto, 1975. 191 pages, photographs. $19.95.

Reviewed by Lillian Allen

This book, produced by the Still Photography Division of the National Film Board of Canada to commemorate International Women's Year, was made possible through the assistance of the Women's Programme of the Department of the Secretary of State.

On the dust jacket it is stated that Lorraine Monk 'has composed a sophisticated and dramatic display of work by Canadian women photographers that ranges from landscape to collage. . . . Sometimes pleasing to the eye, sometimes provocative and disturbing to the mind, their work is always interesting and often compelling.'

I feel this book is a far cry from Lorraine Monk's earlier outstanding books: *Canada,* and *Canada/A Year of the Land.* You have only to see it stacked against the several volumes on photography now available, to realize how far it falls short of its claims to fame. I feel it would rate about 2 or 3 on the Richter scale. In fact it could be reviewed in one word: Why?

A large percentage of the photography is of people, and I could find little in it that is really creative or moving. The many pictures chosen from submissions by Sandra Semchuk and Clara Gutsche are so ordinary as to make the average family album look like an art exhibit. Perhaps they are intended to be a take-off on this album; if so they are successful.

A potato field in Prince Edward Island, by Edith Robinson from 'The Female Eye/Coup d'oeil fèminen'.

Not all work is in this class however. The photographs by Elizabeth McLaughlin in black and white and colour and the picture of a woman on a beach by Janice MacEachern are beautifully sensitive. Claire Beaugrand-Champagne is represented by good character portraiture reminiscent of the early Flemish portraits where the personalities are described further by details around them. An old man with flowers (Page 52) is a beautiful work by Rosemary Gilliat, and there are others, both black and white and colour which show people of different ages and ethnic origins. But why so much space to the series of male nudes, all rosy and misty, by J. Eglington? Why the moustache series (Page 93)? The portrait of a woman by Betty Williamson, chosen for the dust cover, is well done.

The collages, I believe, add nothing to the content of the book. They have been done before, and better. The nature close-ups tend to be little more than factual. They and the black and white landscapes show scant creativity in their developing and exposure stages and so miss the patterns of light and shade which are so necessary to bring this work to an exciting achievement. The pictures of interiors seem devoid of purpose; they tell little of the people who made or inhabited them. Many of the colour landscapes seem underexposed. But some are extremely good: the smoke and light scene by Naima Aer (Page 44) and the dramatic farm scene by Edith Robinson (Page 41).

I am surprised that women who have been crying out against being used or regarded as sex symbols should in this book tend to show so much concern with sex. Without any moral or puritan point of view involved, I find the exploitation of the female as reproducer in the late stages of pregnancy (Pages 24-26) revolting. If these photographs were meant to be satiric, humorous, or tongue-in-cheek, I fail to get the point.

The book as a whole, even with its wide variety of subject matter has, I feel, failed to do justice to the women photographers in Canada. It most certainly fails to be 'a remarkable expression of the art of photography in Canada today' as stated on the dust jacket.

Lillian B. Allen, known for her photographs of designs in nature, was until recently associate professor of housing and design in the Home Economics faculty, University of Manitoba.

IT ALL ENDS UP IN A SHOPPING BAG

By Paul Kligman. McClelland & Stewart Limited, Toronto, 1975. 224 pages. $8.95.

Reviewed by Bill McColl

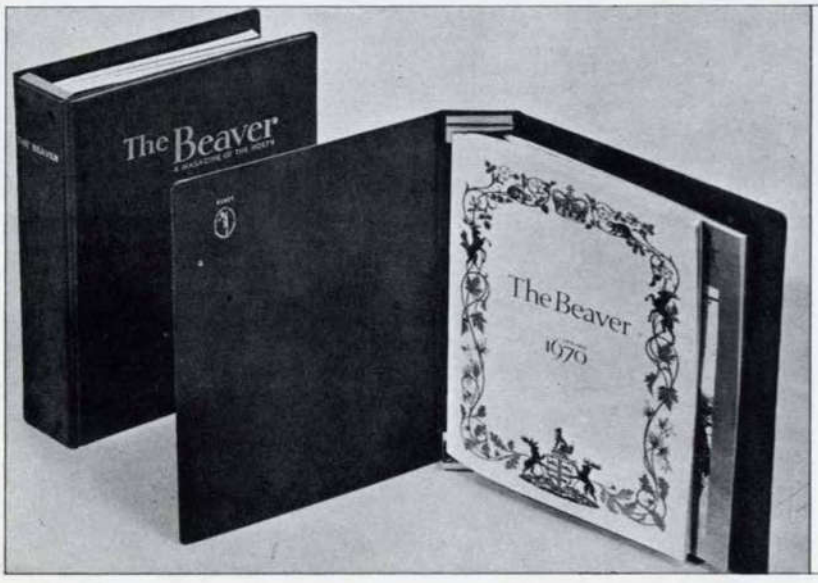
The details of life that enrich the social history of a community and its people are often preserved in light and lively autobiographies. *It All Ends up in a Shopping Bag* by Paul Kligman is such a book. Mr Kligman grew up in Winnipeg's North End in the 1920s and 30s, son of Moishe and Nessie Kay, Russian-Jewish immigrants.

Moishe struggled to make a living selling fruit and vegetables from a truck to suspicious rural shopkeepers with his partner, Noiach Fishman, and then in a store on Selkirk Avenue to suspicious housewives in competition with Kotchuck, the Ukrainian price-cutter. The business failed as the depression deepened, and Moishe became a milkman. Eventually, he became the proprietor of the Spanish Court store, a small grocery store in Winnipeg's Norwood district. He died suddenly and his son, Paul, flew home to make the funeral arrangements.

The book is a series of reminiscences written by Paul about his father and woven around his return home: meeting Aunt Toby and Mischa at the airport, seeing his mother and his sister Lil, and closing the store. The plot sounds like the recipe for a good cry, but Moishe and his jousts with the Crystal Cola Company provide sparkling adventure. Reading is easier if one is born Jewish and familiar with the Yiddish terms which Moishe and his family use so liberally. Kligman provides a glossary at the back of the book for the 'goyishe' reader; if you fall into this category you are faced with skipping back and forth to get the exact meaning. Footnotes might have been more helpful here, but as Moishe might have said proudly of his son's book,

'That's a fackactah [nit-picking] sort of criticism.'

Bill McColl is manager, pensions and insurance, with the H B C head office in Winnipeg.



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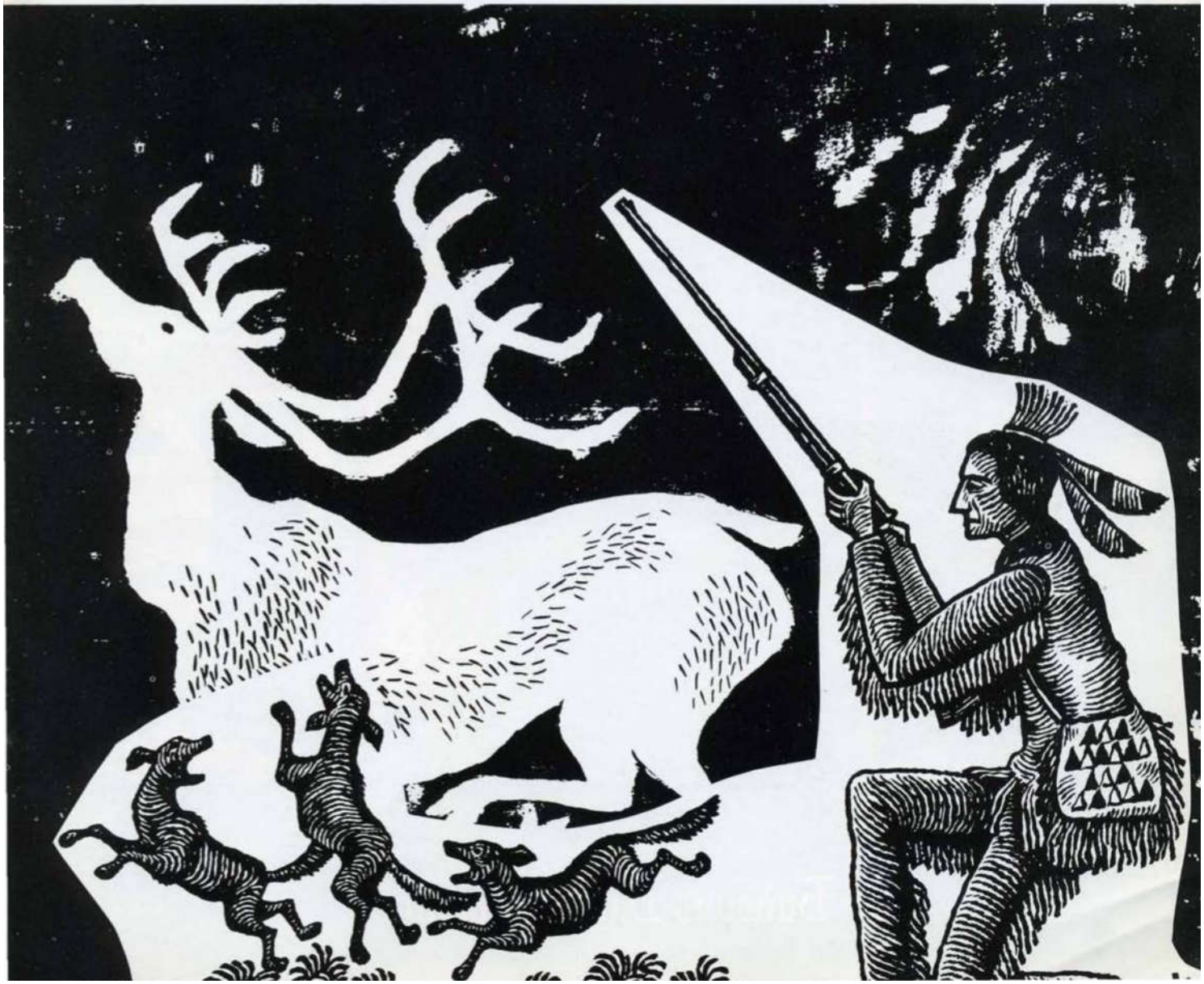

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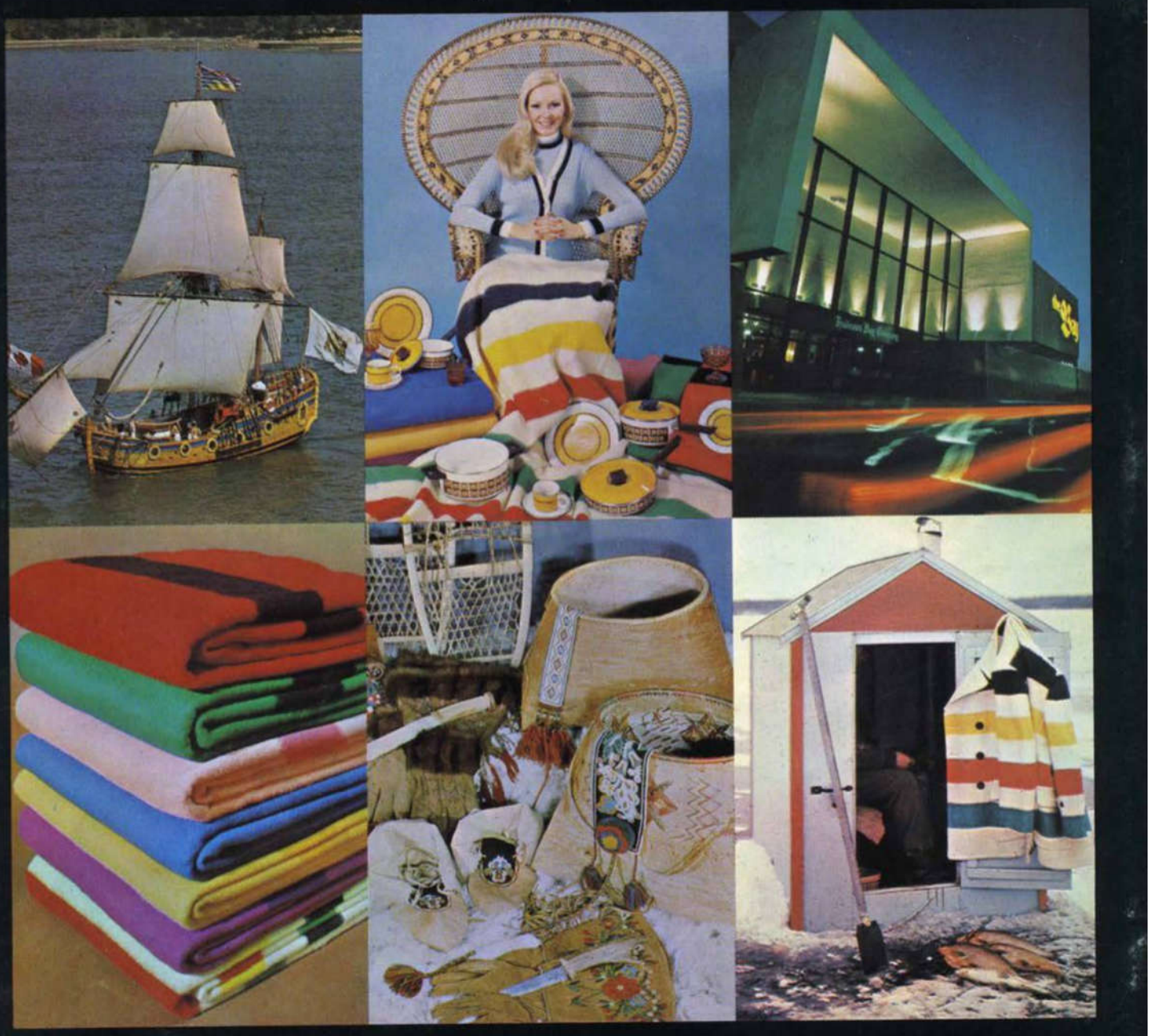

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